

CBW

Coach and

The PSV



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CBW

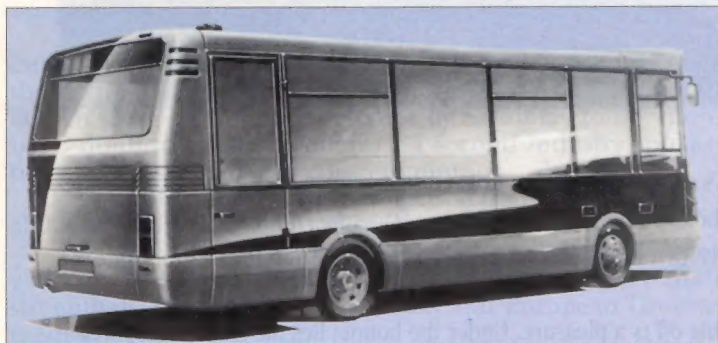
Coach and Bus Week
The PSV industry's news weekly


For a cleanair future
01753 623 500

Contents



Jonckheere Mistral blows in from Belgium... page 6



Marshall midi low-floor - yours for £60,000... page 7



Who is behind launch of The Coach Association?... page 8

COMMENT 5

The challenge facing the new coach industry lobby group

NEWS 6-26

Clarkes of London unveils first Jonckheere Mistral; Marshall launches low-floor midi contender; The Coach Association steps forward; Optare's integral lowfloor citybus has TV launch; why Sporting Tours of Tredegar faced possible revocation; scrapping old buses - tactics or safety?; Birmingham Coach finds shuttle and front line returns are out of line; not so Grey-Green; former Dormobile workers set up Euromotive; CBW seminar should be compulsory

LEGAL NEWS 29-31

Byron's O-licence curtailed; David Ashby refused renewal; Zamir application adjourned

TOUR NEWS 33-36

Face the music; Le Shuttle up 10 per cent; expansion for Greatdays

SUBSCRIPTION FORM 39

Can you afford NOT to have *Coach and Bus Week*?

MARKSMAN 40-43

Planning for profits is the way to make them happen

DIARY 44&46

Toronto training trouble; Mintex double take

LETTERS 49-53

There is a standard for seat belts; Marksman was off target

ALTERNATIVE FUEL 55&56

Is gas a natural?

AWARDS 59-66

Our night to remember - Bob's full house

PROFILE 68-69

Saffords; in the back of beyond

PREVIEW 71-74

Next week's Community Transport Association show

DEALS AND DEALERS 77&78

East London takes ex Wallace Arnold coaches; Ferris goes for Van Hool/DAF

PEOPLE 99

Ken Meddes confirmed as WA md

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Meet the CBW editorial team

THE mask has slipped and a new face of the coach industry exposed to the public for the first time. After months, if not years, of mounting disquiet among coach operators and manufacturers alike, the inevitable has happened.

In recent years the industry has been taking direct hits from a persistent salvo of damaging new rules. To list them is a sobering pastime but to put them into practice is turning into a nightmare.

Speed limit, outside lane, roll-over, Euro 1, Euro 2, seatbelts, disability. While each new regulation can be justified, there is a strong belief that they have been thrust upon the industry without properly consulting the very people who have to put them into practice.

Who has been listening to the coach industry's point of view? Who's been fighting its corner? Who's been asking the operators for their opinion?

Step forward The Coach Association (TCA). As predicted in last week's *CBW*, a gang of five has put the new organisation in gear, although there is a clear potential for its ranks to be swelled by a healthy cross-section of those who operate or manufacture coaches.

While TCA's chairman, MP for Wellingborough, Sir Peter Fry, stresses that the new organisation will complement the Confederation of Passenger Transport — and news of its launch was given a polite welcome by Sardinia House, there is no doubt that the creation of a second industry spokesperson will be greeted with consternation.

By implication there is dissatisfaction with the CPT's ability to fight the coach industry's cause effectively.

Yet there is a great danger that the two organisations will compete, have divided views and dilute, rather than strengthen, representation to British and European Governments.

And if you include the coach tourism promotional work of the Coach Tourism Council, then at best you have a confusing array of initials - CPT (formerly BCC), CTC, TCA.

Unless these three organisations have distinct aims and sing a common tune on the crucial issues, we will all lose out. There are battles lost and, make no mistake, many battles yet to be won - particularly in the European arena where expertise is even more crucial when treading your way through the bureaucratic minefield.

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Mike
Morgan



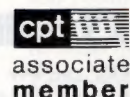
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events

19&20 October: Community Transport Association annual exhibition and conference, Norbreck Castle Hotel, Blackpool. Details on 0161 351 1475

19 October: Buses World-wide meeting, Peter White on Zimbabwe. Fred Tallent Hall, Drummond Street, Euston, London NW1. Details from Ian Johnston, secretary, 3 Cypress Drive, Fleet, Hampshire GU13 9HE

19-25 October: Thirteenth European Coach and Bus Fair, Kortrijk Halls, Kortrijk, Belgium. Details from BAAV, Motestraat 41, B-8800 Roeselare, Belgium, tel +32 (0) 51 22 60 60, fax +32 (0) 51 22 92 73

30 October: Conference; The Role of the Bus in Public Transport Provision in Scotland, Central Hotel, Glasgow. Details from Harrison Consultancy, tel 0141 946 7788

14-16 November: Light Rail 95, Croydon. Details from Suzanne Pealing, Transport Science, on 0151 707 0100

25 November: Coach Industry Awards '95, Metropole Hotel, Birmingham. Details from Lisa Wilson, *Coach and Bus Week* on 01733 63100

5 December: CIT South Eastern Section conference, Kent Transport through the Millennium, Ashford International Hotel, Ashford Kent. Details from Gerald Uzzell, tel 01227 366322

● STOP PRESS ●

EDEN Bus Service of West Auckland has been sold to North East bus subsidiary, United. Michael Widmer managing director of North East said: "The Eden operations dovetail particularly well with United's operations in Bishop Auckland and there are likely to be considerable benefits."

Eden runs 17 vehicles.

▼ Coach

Mistral 50 is 'world first'

Aircraft-style safety for Clarkes

by Mike Morgan

CLARKES of London unveils the first Jonckheere Mistral 50 at the NEC's Coach & Bus '95 this week - a body which does not go into production for two years.

With the Volvo B10M-chassied Mistral, the



Seats pre-empt regs

south east London-based operator claims a world first because the coach is fitted with seatbelts and aircraft-style reinforced seats, designed to overcome the danger of passenger seats being ripped from the floor and thrown forward in the event of an accident.

Seatbelts on coaches is a hotly debated issue and by the end of March 1996 Clarkes will have invested £2.5 million in 20 coaches fitted with seatbelts and reinforced seats.

"We have followed the lead of our air travel counterparts," said Clarkes



Clarkes Mistral is first of pilot production

director Paula Marks. "The new coaches work on similar safety principles and the developments are a first in the coaching industry.

"Rather than wait for legislation we have taken the lead in the belief that these coaches will significantly improve the safety of our passengers."

The Jonckheere Mistral 50 will go to the show in Kortrijk, Belgium, immediately after the NEC.

Jonckheere designers took 14 months to design the body and Clarkes is part of a pilot scheme before the Mistral goes into production in 1997.

▼ Coach and Bus

Edwards leaving Dennis after four years

VERNON Edwards, Dennis director of European operations and former head of LAG (latterly Van Hool) coach sales outlet at Wellingborough, is leaving the coach industry next month.

After four years with Guildford-based Dennis, Mr Edwards is taking up a post with a company which has no connection with coaching.

His departure follows four

years of significant growth by Dennis. It comes as the company prepares the launch at next week's Kortrijk show of its latest European venture, a low-floor Berkhof-bodied Dart SLF which will be known as the Lancet. The new vehicle is expected to rock the Dutch market with its £108,000 price tag for a 75-passenger low-floor bus competing against indigenous vehicles selling at £250,000.

Dennis managing director, John Smith, said: "I have great regret that Mr Edwards is leaving to a position outside the industry. He has made a very significant contribution to Dennis over the last four years and will be sadly missed."

Short-term restructuring of management responsibilities will see general managers for Holland and France reporting directly to Mr Smith.

▼ Bus

£5 million order for Alexander

ON the eve of Coach & Bus '95, Mayflower-owned Walter Alexander has won a £5 million order for 50 high-capacity double deckers from Hong Kong Citybus.

All are on tri-axle Volvo Olympian chassis, also built in Scotland.

The buses will have high-specification interiors with ease of access featuring prominently and full air-conditioning;

they will eventually incorporate high-technology smart card payment systems.

Hong Kong Citybus already has 400 buses built by Alexander; has 80 per cent of its 500-vehicle fleet air-conditioned, rising to 100 per cent within 18 months; and is experiencing 25 per cent annual increase in passengers - currently 300,000 per day.

▼ Coach and Bus

Rate of increase slows

REGISTRATIONS of coaches and buses are up by 28.5 per cent during the first nine months of 1995, according to the latest figures from the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders.

Although the spiralling increase in sales has slowed down - 45 fewer PSVs were put on the road during September compared with the

same month last year - coach sales have rocketed by 59 per cent so far in 1995 and bus sales are up 13.7 per cent.

Volvo heads the league table with 1,209 registrations (581 coach and 628 bus), representing 43.9 per cent market share, and Dennis comes in second with 29.1 per cent - 801 vehicles.

● Full details in next week's **CBW**

Bus

Marshall's new 'small big bus'...

And it's called 'Marshall Minibus'

MARSHALL SPV of Cambridge pulled off one of the surprises of Coach & Bus '95 when it unveiled its first fully built-up bus: the stylish, semi-integral, prosaically-named Marshall Minibus.

Priced at around £60,000 and with several innovative design features, the Minibus looks bound to add to the already fierce competition within what has been called the small big-bus sector: vehicles with all the strength and design attributes of full size vehicles, but with typical seating capacities of 30 to 40.

Dennis started it all with its phenomenally successful Dart. Optare chipped in with the impressive, but pricey Vecta. Volvo launched head-on against the Dart with its B6. And now both Marshall, with the Minibus, and Optare, with

By Mark Barton

the Excel, have upped the competitive stakes by rolling out fully built-up, low-floor integral vehicles.

Marshall, which currently builds on Iveco, Mercedes-Benz, and - intriguingly - Dennis Dart and Volvo B6 chassis, took just 18 months to get its semi-integral Minibus off the drawing board and on to the streets.

Sales and engineering director, John Myers, readily acknowledges the contribution of various parts of the sprawling Marshall group: "We used our experience from aerospace to carry out finite stress analysis.

"There was input from our Bedford truck-making operation on the engineering and it was designed and built by Marshall Bus Division."

Overall length of

the Minibus is 8.5 metres.

Ground to first step is 320mm, which lowers to 250mm after kneeling. The first neat touch is a simple wheelchair ramp fitted under the front step. Developed in conjunction with Passenger Lift Services, it is manually operated as standard and power operated as an option.

The interior floor is flat until just before the rear axle, where two steps lead up to the rear saloon. Second neat touch is the standard fitment of two rearward facing baby seats complete with harnesses in one of the two luggage pens in the front saloon.

Seating capacities within the 2.37-metre wide body range up to 30 seated and 12 standees. There are also combinations of 24 or 23 seats and 12 standees, plus one wheelchair. Standard bus

or semi-coach seats are available.

Seatbelts are not fitted but, according to John Myers, "seatbelt mounting points are built into the structure - both in the floor and side walls."

Neat touch number three is a blown ducted heating or ventilation system incorporated in the overhead Transmatic coving. Hot or cold air is forced down over the side windows, eliminating condensation on the gasket-glazed side windows and allowing the full DPTAC interior to be as uncluttered as possible.

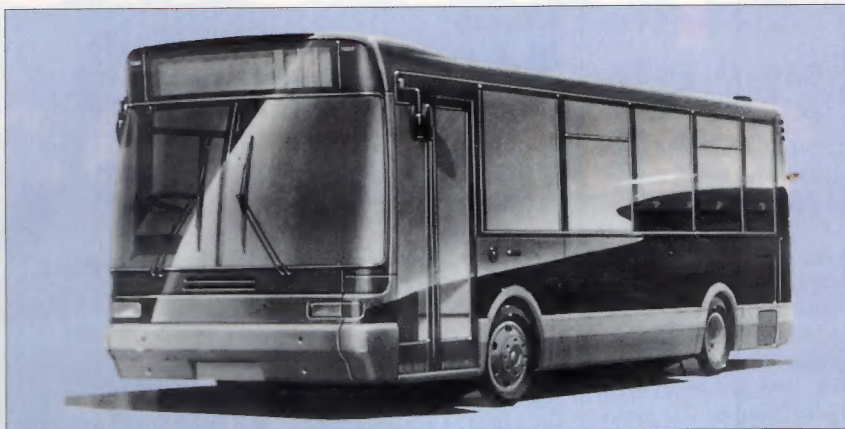
Marshall is claiming a UK first for the construction of the new Minibus. Chassis and body structure is in stainless steel, supplied by Krupps of Germany under the Nirosta 4003 brand name and with an expected - but as yet not

guaranteed - anti-corrosion life of at least 25 years. Alloy and GRP panels are bonded and riveted in position over the body frame.

Running gear is 135 bhp Cummins B Series diesel driving through an Allison AT542 four-speed automatic gearbox. Front axle is GKN's low-floor forged I beam unit.

So, could Marshall supply the semi-integral underframe to other bodybuilders? John Myers is keeping his options open: "It's not our policy to supply to other bodybuilders, but we haven't ruled it out. We will have to see how the market develops."

But he did confirm that Marshall will continue to build on Dennis Dart and Volvo B6 chassis. "They're both part of our mainstream bus-building business," he said.



UK first: chassis and body are in stainless steel with 25-year life



Coach

Milestone maintenance deal

SHEARINGS is moving all its 319-vehicle maintenance to contract maintenance with Volvo from the start of 1996 - a move described by Volvo Bus managing director, Sandy Glennie, as a "milestone in our industry."

Four depots will be integrated into the Volvo truck and bus network, including Shearings' seven-acre premises close to the M6 at Wigan. This will be operated by Volvo distributor, Manchester Truck and Bus. As with the other depots, staff transfer to the local distributor.

In addition to taking over responsibility for all aspects of service and repair, the deal includes regular preventative maintenance and ministry safety inspections. To begin with, the Wigan depot

will continue as a dedicated Shearings facility. However, it is anticipated it will develop quickly as a full truck and bus parts and service dealer, with the prospect of investment and additional jobs. Shearings' satellite workshops at Normanton, Coventry and Tunbridge Wells will be rented by local distributors, Crossroads Commercials, DFC and MC Truck and Bus Ltd, respectively. However, each depot will remain a dedicated Shearings' facility.

Shearings md John Slatcher said: "Shearings is committed to focusing its time and skills in developing a growing share of the highly competitive tour market while leaving Volvo to do what it does best."

CBW

▼ Coach and Bus

Record year for Scania

SCANIA GB has sold more coaches and buses than in any year in its history.

The previous best year, 1990, had been beaten by the end of August, Scania GB having sold 214 units to achieve a market share of 12.5 per cent. The company claims this is down to the popularity of its product and merged sales/after-sales operations which have been broken down into a two-tier structure - one to deal at local level with regional companies, and another to service the needs of national companies.

Scania GB's coach and bus sales have been mirrored by sales of heavy trucks.

▼ Bus

FirstBus £4.1m offer accepted

PEOPLE'S Provincial shareholders have voted to accept the £4.1 million offer from FirstBus.

Over 99 per cent of the holders of issued share capital have agreed to the takeover but the offer has been extended for acceptance until 3pm on 31 October.

Provincial was privatised in 1987 and runs 155 buses around Portsmouth, Gosport and Fareham.

▼ Coach

TCA formed to fight battles

Lobby organisations join forces

CONFUSION over seatbelts is just one reason why five leading coach organisations have joined together to fight the industry's battles under the banner of The Coach Association (TCA) - a new lobby group which takes over from the Coach Industry Action Group (CIAG).

"Complementing not competing with the activities of CPT," says TCA chairman and MP for Wellingborough, Sir Peter Fry, "our aim is to see that EU and British governments are made fully aware of the industry's needs and full consultation takes place before any new laws affecting coaching are put

By Mike Morgan

into effect."

Predictably the seatbelt issue was top of the media agenda at the House of Commons launch and the degree of ignorance evident in the questions served as confirmation that the TCA has a job to do in promoting the arguments.

TCA's first initiative was to announce that seatbelts on new coaches is a condition of membership. Sir Peter said: "As of today, every new coach delivered to members of The Coach Association will have seatbelts fitted throughout conforming to EU standards."

National Express,



Westminster line-up: TCA founders Bob Viper, Sir Peter Fry, Neil Berresford and Bill Russell



Sir Peter Fry: 'consultation before new laws'

Shearings, Volvo, Plaxton and Scottish Citylink are the founder members, representing 52 per cent of all coach passenger traffic, 57 per cent of new coach chassis and 42 per cent of all new coach bodies on UK roads.

Vice chairman, National Express chief executive Bob Wiper, said membership was by invitation only as TCA was anxious to represent an industry which conformed to high standards - hence the requirement to specify seatbelts.

With legislative

threats in the pipeline, CTA aims to focus the diverse interests of the coach industry on unified public relations and lobbying. Improved image of coach travel and further improved quality is sought but central to TCA's activities is the need for a positive influence on new regulations - the Disability Bill is regarded as a classic case where confusion and uncertainty could have been avoided.

● For further information tel: 0990 561771 or fax 0990 561774.

▼ Coach and Bus

ICS forms new company for coach and bus cleaning

ONE of Britain's best-known industrial cleaning specialists, Initial Contract Services, has moved into coach and bus cleaning.

ICS has formed a new company, Initial Transport Services, to develop this area of its business and has already secured business with Hyndburn Transport and with Capital Citybus.

"The condition of buses, which are continually in the public eye, is an important part of the service that the transport operator provides - dirty public vehicles and stations strewn with litter and damaged by graffiti are uninviting and threatening environments," said ITS' md Phil Simmons.

ITS says the combi-

nation of its cleaning expertise, equipped with modern chemicals to remove such horrors as chewing gum, and its other services make an attractive package for operators.

"We are equipped to deal with the demands of the major areas of transportation, and operate 24 hours a day, seven days a week, all year,"

said Mr Simmons.

"Our staff are highly skilled and trained to work to critical timescales.

"As they are working in public areas, we adopt a high profile, and train our staff to interact with the public and, more importantly, to react quickly to any suspicious baggage or rubbish."

▼ Bus

Seal of approval

SOLENT BlueLine is launching its latest delivery of four Iveco 59/12s bodied by Mellor Coachcraft at Coach & Bus '95.

The 29-seat vehicles will have the mayoral seal of approval from Southampton, passed by the city's major, Mrs Margaret Singerman, at the show. SBL has now spent £1.3 million on new vehicles in the last 18 months.



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With a low floor and the high standards you would expect, the Excel delivers... the **COMPLETE** solution

OPTARE

For more information: 0113 264 5182



Merseyside services rebranded CityPlus with 48 East Lancs Darts

▼ Bus

Darts for North Western

EAST Lancs-bodied Dennis Darts are the frontline vehicles for British Bus subsidiary North Western's new CityPlus network.

A total of £4 million has been invested in 48 of the DPTAC vehicles, with customer care assistants boarding them to offer passenger information. As a result of the investment, North Western has been able to shed most of its elderly deckers.

The upgrade, which offers better north-south services and will include two additional routes, is

the result of a truce with Merseybus, which has agreed to co-ordinate services in some areas.

"We are doing our bit to provide bus facilities as part of the Liverpool city centre traffic strategy and the various other projects within Merseyside," Merseyside PTA chairman Mark Dowd said. "These complement quality bus companies in their quest to advance bus travel."

But central government came under fire from North Western's md Bob Hind. "Although suc-

cessive governments have always acknowledged the need for an effective public transport network and recognise the major environmental benefits, particularly in city centres, of encouraging public transport, there has been little or no financial support for the concept," he said.

"The lack of Government enthusiasm for the bus industry has consequently been reflected by the lack of investment by operators, a situation aggravated in some areas by the uncertainty caused by intensive competition."

▼ Coach

Sporting Tours has duration reduced

Pugh considered revocation

By Michael Jewell

ANNETTE Lane's O-licence duration has been cut to expire at the end of the year.

At disciplinary proceedings in Cardiff, South Wales traffic commissioner John Mervyn Pugh had been considering the possible revocation of the licence held by Mrs Lane, of 12 Castle Street, Tredegar, Gwent, trading as Sporting Tours, of Tredegar, and her disqualification from holding an O-licence.

When the hearing started in August, Mrs Lane agreed her husband Gary Lane should step down as her nominated transport manager with immediate effect, and the

hearing was adjourned to give her an opportunity of finding a suitable replacement. (CBW, 19 August)

Since Mrs Lane had taken over the running of the business, with her husband as transport manager, three prohibition notices had been issued to her vehicles in April and May of this year.

A coach being driven by Mr Lane on a trip to Land's End received a delayed prohibition when the silencer was found to be insecure.

When the hearing was continued, the commissioner was told Mr Lane had been replaced as the nominated CPC holder by a Mr V K Beach, a former DoT vehicle examiner.

▼ Coach and Bus

Voith ups prices of its spares

VOITH has put its spares prices up by 31 per cent, blaming deteriorating exchange rates and increases from the transmissions' source, in Germany. The Croydon-based company has pointed out that, thanks to high stock levels and efficient management, it has staved off price increases since 1993.



▼ Bus

British Steel 'recycles' decker

IT'S ironic that this refurbished Daimler Fleetline is used by British Steel Tinplate to promote can recycling! The vehicle has been converted into four areas, each targeting children with the message that old, steel tins have a recycling value. **CBW**

A selection of quality pre-owned vehicles

DAF SB 2300 DUPLÉ 340

1988 (E). 53 reclining plus courier seat, 6 speed ZF Splitter gearbox radio/PA/cassette, centre air sunken toilet, centre air continental door, water boiler, TV only. M.O.T Feb 96.

MAN 16290 JONCKHEERE DEAUVILLE

1989 (F). 6 speed ZF gearbox, 49 reclining seats, Sutrak air conditioning, double glazing, oil floor mounted toilet, curtains, radio/PA/cassette, painted all white, M.O.T 24.01.96.

BEDFORD YMP 320

1986 (D). 53 reclining seats, 6 speed ZF gearbox, interior brown, side air vents, rear air vents, 1st March 1996.

BEDFORD YMP PLAXTON PARAMOUNT

1987 (D). 35 seats plus 2 tables, power door, side lockers, radio/PA/cassette, exterior white/blue, interior grey. M.O.T 2.6.96.

VAN HOOL T815 INTEGRAL

1991 (H). Cummins L10 290 BHP engine, ZF HP 590 auto gearbox with integral retarder, Sutrak air conditioning, autolube, variable top speed limiter, road speed governor, kneel facility, ferry lift, Webasto heating, brown moquette, 53 reclining seats plus courier, livinghouse drivers seat, plug door, half rear emergency door, 2 roof air vents, double glazed, side blinds, rear curtains, radiomobile radio/PA system, M.O.T's Jan 96. **Choice of 2.**

VOLVO B10MT PLAXTON 4000 RS

1989 (F). 65 reclining seats plus twin courier, TV/Video stereo, toilet, double glazing, sun blinds, curtains, carpets, drinks, fridge, drivers bunk, crew seat, M.O.T. 25.02.96.

VOLVO B10M DUPLÉ LASER

1984 (A). 57 fixed seats, radio/PA/cassette, power door, side lockers, exterior white/blue, interior brown. M.O.T 15.5.96.

VOLVO B10M DUPLÉ 340

1985 (B). 51 retrimmed reclining seats, oil sunken toilet, continental door, tinted glass, curtains, power door, radio/PA/cassette, repainted white. **New M.O.T.**

VOLVO B10 MKIII VAN HOOL ALIZEE

1990 (G). ZF 6 Speed S690 manual gearbox, Telma Retarder, autolube, ferry lift, road speed governor, variable top speed limiter, exhaust brake, webasto heating, plug front entrance door, centre continental door, half rear emergency door, centre toilet/servy, crew compartment, 3 roof vents, forced air ventilation, livinghouse drivers seat, courier seat, 40 reclining seats, brown moquette, double glazed, side blinds, rear curtains, radiomobile radio/PA system, M.O.T's 2 x Feb 96, 1 x Oct 96. **Choice of 3.**

SCANIA ELITE K113 PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3500

1992 (J). 7 speed manual GR801 comfort shift gearbox, ABS, road speed governor, variable top speed limiter, exhaust brake, kneel facility, ferry lift, autolube, electric retarder, Webasto heating, inswinging entrance door, central continental door, centre toilet, half rear emergency door, 3 roof vents, forced air ventilation, aircraft lockers, crew compartment, grey moquette, 43 reclining seats, centre gangway carpet, double glazed, rear curtains, side blinds, aluminium wheels, Blaupunkt radio/PA system, new M.O.T.

SCANIA K112 VAN HOOL SH

1987 (H). 10 speed manual gearbox, Telma Retarder, reclining seats, double glazed window, centre bunk toilet, TV/Video, 2 drivers sleeping compartments, carpets, fridge, power door, red/cream grey/ind moquette, M.O.T 12.5.96.

SCANIA K122 PLAXTON 4000

1985 (C). 72 reclining seats, courier seat, toilet, drinks, M.O.T 11/95.

LEYLAND DUPLÉ DOMINANT IV

1981 (W). 55 seats, ZF 6 speed gear box, radio/cassette M.O.T 07.09.96.

LEYLAND TIGER 24 PLAXTON 2400

1983 (S). 53 reclining seats, 6 speed ZF gearbox, Telma, air condition, 14 roof air vents, double glazed, side blinds, rear curtains, radio/cassette M.O.T 24.07.96.

FORD TRANSIT DEANSGATE

1993 (K). 14 high back seats, radio/cassette, M.O.T 20.6.96.

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In brief

Act message

THEATRE tours in schools are an effective and popular way of communicating road safety messages to students, according to research by The Scottish Office and The Scottish Council for Research in Education. The Scottish Road Safety Campaign has been using the tours since 1990.

Stop fuming

CONFUSION over exhaust missions can be ironed out with the DoT booklet *In Service Exhaust Emission Standards for Road Vehicles*, compiled with the help of the CPT. It is free from the Vehicle Certification Agency, 1 The Eastgate Office Centre, Eastgate Road, Bristol BS5 6XX.

Red hotline

THE Labour Party last week leaked a Tory 'damage limitation' document which reveals, says shadow transport minister Joan Walley MP, what a shambles the 'Cones Hotline' has been.

More info

LT Buses' real-time information system, Countdown, is being extended to routes 220 and 297 - services run, respectively, by London United in Hammersmith and Fulham and from Ealing by Challenger Buses. On 220, 36 bus stops will carry 'next bus' information, and on 297, a dozen stops, the latter project costing £90,000.

No referral

COACH traffic over Pultney Bridge in Bath and Dartmoor National Park is facing restrictions, says the CPT. In Bath, all coach traffic over the ailing bridge may be stopped, and in Dartmoor, the advisory guide for access is becoming mandatory. For full details, write to Allan Edmonson at the CPT.

▼ **Coach**

Orders come in for Optare first integral lowfloor

All-new body structure but proven driveline and engine sways operators

by Mark Williams

OPTARE has already won orders from "a number of operators, taking significant quantities" of its all-new, low-floor integral citybus, which carries a median price tag of £80,000.

Given its public debut at Coach & Bus 95, the new Excel was unveiled to a generally approving, selected audience of operators last week at Granada TV Studios, Nottingham.

The event, presented in documentary style by the *Today* programme's John Humphrys, also marked the 10th anniversary of Optare, which was formed by management and employees following the closure of the British Leyland bus building operation, Charles H Roe in 1985. The new vehicle, a

fully integrated, monocoque construction overlaid with typical Optare design flair and build quality, is the result of a comprehensive two-year development programme and marks a vital stage in Optare's growth as a respected and trend-setting bus manufacturer.

Excel is the company's first full-sized integral and low-floor citybus. It is also a move away from Optare's previously favoured Alusuisse body-building system to a more traditional construction - aluminium and GRP body panels stretched over an anti-corrosion treated steel frame.

"We have been able to undertake this all-new vehicle design and build-

ing project for two reasons," said Optare managing director, Russell Richardson.

"Our size means we have short lines of communications, so we can accurately assess market needs, develop a specification to fulfil them and put our ideas into practice with unmatched speed.

"In addition, with Excel, we have been able to build on technology and components which we have well proven in other applications - the basic structure, for example, is conceptually similar to that employed on the MetroRider, of which more than 2,000 are now in service."

Styled by Optare's long-term design consultant, Fran Cush, the Excel is powered by a Cummins

B series 5.9-litre 160bhp diesel, which meets Euro 2 emission standards (due October next year) and drives through an Allison 'World Series' B300R automatic gearbox.

Engine and gearbox are mounted on a demountable carrier for improved maintenance access. The system is totally self-sealing so there is no loss of fluid, and an engine change should be able to be effected in about four hours.

Normal step height is 320mm, which can be lowered through a kneeling device to 250mm. The interior floor is flat at this height to the rear axle, where two steps lead to the raised rear saloon.

The Excel is available in four lengths: 9.5, 10, 10.7 and 11.4 metres,



Excel — unveiled in style at Granada Studios, and featured on Radio 4's *Today* programme

are's itybus

all with the same maximum body width of 2.5-metres and the same front and rear overhang.

Seating capacities vary from 36 and 16 standees to 48 and 22 standees, with an innovative inward-facing twin seat arrangement beyond the rear axle.

The £80,000 price being quoted by Optare is very much a mid-range - the smallest variant will be cheaper and the largest will be more expensive.

Initially, the entire sales effort will be concentrated in the UK, where Optare is promoting its one-stop-shop concept of bus purchase, supplying everything from vehicle finance to parts supply, after sales service (through 30 dealers) and roadside assistance.

The first deliveries to UK operators will begin next March and Optare is looking for sales of "around 100" in the first year. However, export is seen as being part of the planned growth for the vehicle and the Manston Lane factory is expected to begin building left-hand-drive variants this time next year.

According to Russell Richardson, there's more to come. "We have other new products for launch during next year," he told CBW. "And obviously low-floor developments figure highly in our plans. As I understand it, the current draft of the Disability Bill requires all vehicles on local services to be accessible to disabled people - and in buses that means low floor."



Step height can be lowered to 250mm by using kneeling mechanism



Rear of the new vehicle features a full-size route display board

In brief

Attacks hints

THE Department of Transport has produced a booklet explaining not only the regulations relating to protection of bus crews but also offering advice. *Protecting Bus Crews - a Practical Guide* takes bus operators through the methods which reduce the chances of attacks.

New coolant

TEXACO has launched ETX 6280 Long Life Coolant, which is claimed to virtually eliminate anti-freeze corrosion and problems with suspended solids blockage, while lasting 400,000 miles on the original fill. It uses patented carboxylates to reduce metal attack, which could cost £260 in five years.

Approved

FIRSTBUS plc's acquisition of Lidgeys Coaches of Cornwall, through its subsidiary operator Western National Ltd, has been approved by the director general of fair trading and will not be referred to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission.

DoT office

THE Department of Trade and Industry has opened a regional sponsorship office in the West Midlands to help vehicle equipment suppliers get a foothold in local and export markets. The DTI vehicles division office is staffed by widely-experienced graduates with practical industry experience. It can be contacted on 0121 212 5017.

Hours pledge

STEVEN Norris says existing differences between domestic and EU drivers' hours rules will be maintained. Non-tacho vehicles such as farm vehicles and buses which travel less than 31 miles will still be exempt from the EC hours ruling.

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▼ Bus

Scrapping the unemployed

Business tactics or safety ethics?

ONE of Britain's biggest bus companies, Go-Ahead Group, is scrapping serviceable vehicles to reduce competition from low-investment operators.

At just one breakers' yard, hundreds of double-decks have gone under the torch this year at the demand of major players in the market, despite having some service life left in them.

"I suppose they're trying to cause a shortage of this type of vehicle," said an observer. "They are trying to shove the little man out of business. Most operators can't afford new buses."

Go-Ahead's operations

By Mark Williams

director Chris Moyes confirmed that it is GAG policy to scrap all buses in which they no longer have an interest, regardless of their condition.

"We dispose of coaches for re-sale because they are not suitable for local bus operations," he told *CBW*. "Service buses which are displaced are redeployed, cannibalised for spares, or scrapped."

Mr Moyes said very few of the vehicles which reached the scrapyards had a great deal of life left in them.

"Many of these buses have



Big companies state scrapped buses are not fit to be sold...

worked extremely hard, particularly those based in the north-east," said Mr Moyes, who refuted the suggestion that the policy was purely to disadvantage small bus operations.

"Competing bus operators are quite capable of getting enough second-hand vehicles. However, we do believe it is not our business to supply them. It is better to get these vehicles off the road, then invest to take things forward."

Opportunist operators who, using the low value of these high-capacity vehicles, have skimmed the best bus routes for an easy profit, have been a thorn in the side of companies such as Stagecoach, FirstBus, British Bus and Go-Ahead.

The major operators have claimed they are working in the passengers' interest, providing networked, high-quality services

on and off peak, and that the opportunists are out to make a fast buck, simultaneously damaging the image of bus travel by using obsolete buses.

A scheme to reduce the average age of the PSV parc was proposed two years ago by Volvo Bus UK md Sandy Glennie, in his role as chairman of the PSV committee of the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders. Tabled as a way of reducing exhaust emissions, it involved a maximum 10 per cent subsidy based on the number of 'green' bus seats swapped for those in 'age-expired' vehicles. The SMMT had hoped this allowance would be provided by government, in whole or in part.

● **What do you think? Should more secondhand buses be scrapped, and why? Let us know by post, at the usual address, or by fax, on 01733 62656.**



...smaller firms say it is a ploy to force them to buy new

▼ Coach and Bus

Pollution penalties will be costly

THE National Rivers Authority is seeking penalties of up to £20,000, or unlimited Crown Court fines, in cases of serious oil and vehicle washing pollution.

The NRA says prevention of fuel spillage and leakage by building bunds at supply points, and the foul-sewer disposal of coach and bus washings may be cheaper than the fines, and warns that many insurers no longer cover pollution incidents.

"Wash-down water from vehicle cleaning is usually contaminated with

detergent, oil and silt, all of which damage river life," says the NRA. "Even if only small quantities of these substances are allowed to make their way into a river or stream, they can seriously damage water quality and aquatic life."

Although it says pollution incidents have fallen, there were almost 7,000 oil pollutions last year - 27 per cent of all incidents.

A video presentation, Pollution Prevention Pays, is available from the NRA by phoning 01454 624345.

▼ Bus

Experiment in time

TESTS by the Transport Research Laboratory have shown that 80,000 passenger hours are saved every year by the bus priority experiment at Shepherds Bush Green.

Savings in time and vehicle operating costs have been put at between £300,000 and £400,000 per year, which easily

exceeds the total capital cost of the scheme.

The TRL studied the Hammersmith and Fulham scheme, using bus journey times, passenger numbers, other road traffic and traffic flow to reach its conclusion. The measures include a Bus Advance Area, giving buses traffic light priority.

CBW

▼ Coach and Bus

CPT chief rallies the Labour conference

'Free enterprise public transport the way forward'

CONFEDERATION of Passenger Transport director general Veronica Palmer has assured the Labour Party that commercially-run public transport offers the best option for passengers.

At a fringe meeting during the Labour Conference in Brighton, Mrs Palmer said the privatised industry was beginning to arrest the decline in ridership, and had no part to play in bringing the decline about.

"The decline in ridership started well before 1985," she said. "We must, then, address the wider picture. To find the real cause, I suggest

By Mark Williams

we look at consistently increasing car ownership, made possible by easy credit and, until recently, cheap fuel. In 1951, only 14 per cent of households owned cars. By 1992, the figure was 70 per cent."

The key to better patronage is quality in three key areas, said Mrs Palmer.

"Quality of vehicles, reliability and information. If we get these right, we attract patronage. We can hold up or even reverse a national trend. In Bristol, Oxford, Exeter, York, Carlisle and the Glasgow area, ridership

has increased... bus travel in rural areas has increased by 19 per cent since 1985."

She also put in a word for the smaller operator, attracting attention to the social function of the local coach and bus industry, and warning that the burden of regulation could cripple these small businesses.

"In the same day, the same vehicle will be used to operate an early morning tendered service... perhaps then will get in a quick commercial service... then a school contract, another bus service or two, an excursion to a local beauty spot,



Veronica Palmer: 'Back the small operator'

before the return schools contract, a registered service from the station back to the residential estates, before an evening's private hire.

"Not just a workhorse, but the lifeblood of

the community. Impose too many unattainable regulations and you cause the whole system to collapse.

"And it is unlikely the void will be filled by one of the big groups."

▼ Coach and Bus

Government gives assurances to delegation

ZERO rating of VAT on public transport will remain for the foreseeable future, said paymaster general, David Heathcoat-Amory.

A delegation from the Confederation of Passenger Transport, led by director general Veronica Palmer, got the res-

ponse to its pre-Budget submission, presented during a meeting with Mr Heathcoat-Amory at the Treasury (CBW, 7 October).

Mrs Palmer, CPT president Ted Hesketh, Dr Martin Higginson and operator Ron Whittle tackled him over a number of

issues, including tax benefits on season tickets, taxation on car parking and capital allowances. After lengthy discussion, Mrs Palmer was ebullient.

"Perhaps more than ever before, the Government has shown itself to be aware of the

issues that affect our industry," she said. "The Treasury's acceptance of our arguments represents a giant leap of faith. Public transport is now regarded, not just by the Department of Transport but by the Treasury, as the common-sense option."



Pioneer: Jersey's only decker - for now - is this Pioneer Coaches Titan open-topper

▼ Bus

Meet island's only decker

A SECOND decker may join this 1957 Titan open-top, run by Pioneer Coaches of Jersey. Managing director Mick Eden has obtained a former London RT, and is busy restoring it. Meanwhile, this vehicle remains the only decker on the island.

Preservationists may be appalled that the former Lancaster City Transport vehicle has been 'chopped' but this was the only format in which the local authority would allow it to be operated. It works all Summer on tours of the south and west coasts. **CBW**

Coach and Horseman of the year.

Jockeying for position as the Optimo III's greatest advocate is Coach Operator of the Year, Horseman Coaches. The thoroughbred featured in the photofinish below, joins 40 others already running in Horseman's colours. Indeed, Optimo III's have become such a safe bet that they have been voted Mini/Midicoach of the Year. And why not? Carrying 18 or 21 passengers is no handicap at all, with a 4.2 litre turbo charged engine ensuring no course should pose a problem, in wet or dry conditions. Study the athletic form below and you'll see the looks and prestige of a big coach, for around one third of the cost. Take a tip from Mr Horseman: If you'd like to get into the saddle yourself, call Steve Prime on 01737 768585, and he will tell you why Optimo III is the hot favourite.



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▼ Coach

Rates prompt BCC to pull in its horns

'Shuttle and front-line coaching returns are not in line with costs'

LOW margins on tour work have persuaded Birmingham Coach Company to concentrate on its core business of local contracts, private hire and express diagrams.

"The rates for shuttle and front-line coaching are not in line with costs," said md Geoff Howle. "Inflation in transport costs is running higher than elsewhere."

Mr Howle said the decision to pull in its horns - from 95 to 86 vehicles - and put more effort into its express work was purely financial and reactive.

"Admittedly our cost base is high," he said, drawing attention to his company's premises in Warley, recently acquired. "But I believe coach operators are in a falling market and that effort placed elsewhere, in less seasonal work, may produce better margins."

"Continuity of work is important. Tour opera-



BCC: cutting tours and hoping for higher margins in core business

By Mark Williams

tors' rates are not realistic, and margins are low, yet operators are able to justify their losses or sustain themselves by trading vehicles. They buy a £90,000 coach for a season and sell it for £90,000 later due to high demand for these vehicles," he said. The bubble will eventually burst, he added, but his experience of selling his

own vehicles - getting inquiries from as far afield as Ireland and Gambia - suggested that it hasn't yet.

BCC's operations on the former WMT LondonLiner operation, now branded London Express by National Express, have undergone some change.

The F-reg double-deck vehicles provided by BCC are being replaced with its M-reg Van Hool single-decks, the only remaining double-deck being an H-reg. BCC operates all London Express' diagrams.

"We've gone for the Van Hools from a standpoint of quality and reliability. It's part of a major

marketing campaign," said London Express services manager Reno Peers. "We haven't finalised the changes yet... we're still putting ideas together."

Mr Peers said a new livery, timetabling changes to attract the theatre market, and others to attract the London market, would be a part of the campaign. Promotional fare reductions may also be incorporated.

He said the apparent competition with other National Express services was not an issue.

"London Express is an alternative service. It offers a more direct route, free bus fares and other premiums to ticket holders, and sets out for passengers who, for one reason or another, don't want to travel from Digbeth. Together the National Express and London Express services are developing the travel market in complementary fashion."

▼ Coach and Bus

CIT publishes careers guide

A NEW transport careers guide is being mailed free to 10,000 schools and colleges, universities and libraries.

The second edition of the Chartered Institute of Transport's *Careers On The Move* gives profiles of the industry's sectors, sample careers, operator listings and details of education provision within the industry.

Encouragement is provided in the form of individual experience of careers in transport but the guide is designed to be of particular use to careers advisers.

● Copies of the guide cost £4 from the CIT, on 0171 636 9952. **CIT**



▼ Bus

Axcess poses for cameras at revamped Park and Ride

RIDER York's 14 new Wrights AxcessUltralow buses queued up for the camera at the launch of York City Council's revamped Park and Ride scheme. The Scania

L113-chassis vehicles have DPTAC features and kneeling suspension, heavily signed on the new fleet for the public's benefit.

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UBOA

The United Bus Owners of America is one of the major trade associations in the United States of America. More commonly referred to as 'UBOA' (YOU-BOA). It could be likened to our own Confederation of Passenger Transport UK, 'CPT'. It is based in Washington DC and acts as both a supplier of information for members and as a Governmental Lobbyist. It has a small team of paid officers and a volunteer committee structure made up of members. It offers a wide range of services to members from Insurance and Training to Marketing and a range of publications offering guidance on operating nitty gritty. Its Chief Executive is Wayne Smith who has led UBOA for over 10 years and has visited the UK to attend the CPT Coach and Bus Show in Birmingham.

BUS EXPO

This is an annual event held each January, the location is changed each year and has stretched from Florida to Chicago and New Orleans to Las Vegas. Around 1200 delegates attend with an increasing international awareness, British delegates

have always been a regular feature but in recent times Australians and South East Asians have made visits, plus a Canadian attendance is increasing. The business sessions always cover a wide range of topics with good quality speakers and various Government agencies have made presentations. The coach and bus exhibition always features every major manufacturer selling into North America. Homegrown MCI's, imported Van Hool's and Setra's, American built Neoplan's, Mexican Dina's, plus the Canadian '**PREVOST**' now owned jointly by Volvo and Henley's. It is a large show and also has sections covering parts and service plus tourist attractions.

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Coach and Bus Week ending 14 October 1995

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Late morning departure from Heathrow by wide bodied United Airlines flight to Albuquerque, New Mexico. Arrival in Albuquerque is mid-evening where you will be met by our representative who will escort you to the Hyatt Hotel, the conference hotel and adjacent to the convention centre and home to the exhibition.

MONDAY 29 JANUARY 1996

Full day in Albuquerque with a choice of activity. UBOA will stage a full day of business sessions which can be attended, or a full day included tour to Santa Fe is available for delegates or partners if attending. This evening all are welcome at the opening UBOA evening entertainment.

TUESDAY 30 JANUARY 1996

Morning business sessions followed by the opening, late morning, of the coach and bus exhibition. This evening will again feature UBOA entertainment.

WEDNESDAY 31 JANUARY 1996

Again UBOA feature a morning business session and the coach exhibition will be open throughout the day. This evening is free for your own last night celebrations, dinner at the hotel or the dining choice in Albuquerque will satisfy even the most demanding.

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▼ Bus

Not so Grey-Green

But continuity must be kept despite LT's 'red ruling'

By Mark Williams

A COVENT Garden design consultancy has been contracted to re-livery Grey-Green's London bus fleet.

Sigmund Shalit & Associates is to work with the commercial director of Grey-Green subsidiary Leaside Buses, Mark Yexley, on combining the corporate identity with LT's '80 per cent red' ruling in the capital.

Cowie Group company Grey-Green operates 1,000 buses under its Leaside and South London Buses operators, but the trick is to produce a livery design which will give continuity with the Grey-Green coach fleet. Sigmund Shalit was chosen in the light of projects for Airbus Industries and Volvo.



Grey-Green going 80 per cent red for London



Drivers and passengers like the new image

▼ Bus

Tayside's designer drivers

A NEW image for drivers has been launched by Tayside Buses to give the 300 staff a co-ordinated uniform.

Jointly designed by staff of the Dundee bus company and Uniforms Unlimited of London, the uniform incorporates a navy quilted blouson, matching navy trousers and pullover,

contrasted with a light blue shirt and specially designed tie.

Jack Henry, chief executive of Tayside Buses, said:

"We are delighted with the new image. The modern uniform is very comfortable to wear and has been received well by passengers and drivers."

▼ Bus

Grampian wins sacking case

AN industrial tribunal has upheld Grampian Transport's decision to sack one of its drivers last December over alleged missing cash. The Aberdeen firm accused William Davidson of gross misconduct for being unable to account for cash shortfalls on vehicles driven by him. On 20 occasions late last year, it alleged, deficits were discovered on buses Mr Davidson had driven at some stage during that day.

The TGWU's Aberdeen secretary Ian Bruce argued there was no evidence to show Mr Davidson had taken the money and that someone else could have taken the cash at times which would throw suspicion on to Mr Davidson.

However, the tribunal ruled that Grampian Transport had not acted unreasonably.

▼ Bus

'Apron' bus is a Van Hool first

VAN Hool's contribution to high-capacity airport 'apron' buses is this incredible, 200-seat low-floor vehicle, the AP 1237.

The first has gone into service at Frankfurt's Inter Airport, relaying passengers to big jets such as 747s. It is 3.75 metres wide and a shade under 15 metres long, with six double-width doors.

With the emphasis on short journeys of a few hundred metres, standing room takes prominence, accommodating five people per square metre, with huge luggage pens. Van Hool has already produced many other airport transfer buses which are in service at airports all over the world.



Flying in the face of convention, the incredible 200-seat Van Hool AP 1237

▼ Bus

Driver delivers pupils to police

A FIFE Scottish driver last week took his vehicle and its primary school passengers to Cupar police station after rowdy behaviour among the under 11s resulted in an upper-deck window being kicked out. Fife Scottish operations director, Ken Smart, said: "This was by no means an isolated incident. This is just part of a worsening situation and I am sure our experience is no different to others." Younger children are actually becoming more troublesome than teenagers, the company finds. "I would like the media, schools and local councils to take note of these incidents, especially in the light of the current seat-belt debate," Mr Smart said. "Anyone who thinks seat-belts will make children behave is living in cloud-cuckoo-land."

CBW



Determined not to be defeated, four colleagues turned a disaster into an opportunity - and a new company was born

▼ **Coach and Bus**

A company built out of adversity

What motivated four former Dormobile workers to start their own company?

DORMOBILE closed its doors in 1994 but four of the workforce, Paul Wrigley, Dennis Noble, Des Goldup and Michael Jones met regularly on monthly Sunday evenings to keep in touch. It became apparent they dearly missed the team spirit and the work they had been doing over the past 20 years.

They decided to get together and form a company of their own and contacted the cream of their former colleagues to see if they were interested in working with the old team. They all jumped at the chance and Euromotive (Kent) Ltd was formed in January 1995.

The workforce consists of four directors: Mr Wrigley, managing director; Mr Noble, sales and marketing; Mr Goldup, engineering director; and Mr Jones, production

director. Each has 14-21 years experience in the business.

The 11 members of the workforce have between 10 and 29 years experience on coach building and van conversions.

Mr Wrigley and Mr Noble said: "Getting the

by Lee Puffett

team together meant that training wasn't required and we could get to work straight away. We know lots of people in the industry so we knew the suppliers required. We pride ourselves on giving a date for completion and

sticking to it. All work completed is thoroughly checked by the production and engineering director before the deadline to ensure everything is correct before delivery.

"Quality, reliability and customer service are very important and we pull out all the stops to

provide it."

The company is in Hythe, Kent, on an Industrial Estate set in beautiful countryside. Euromotive is happy to receive any visitors who wish to look at its work and makes visitors feel very welcome.

Members of the firm say they can work on any kind of conversion and overcome any technical problem by putting their experienced heads together.

The company has completed over 100 vehicles since trading started.

On board a half-completed Ford Iveco, the quality of the finish was evident together with the products used. Mr Wrigley said they paid the extra for quality to ensure peace of mind and long life of the product. Many hours can be lost in travelling to repair a faulty part.



Pride in their company means pulling out all the stops until the job is done

CBW

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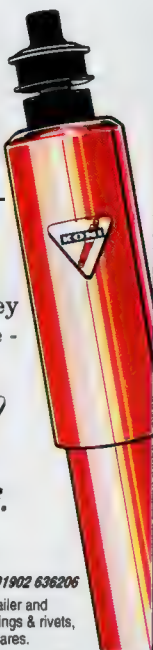
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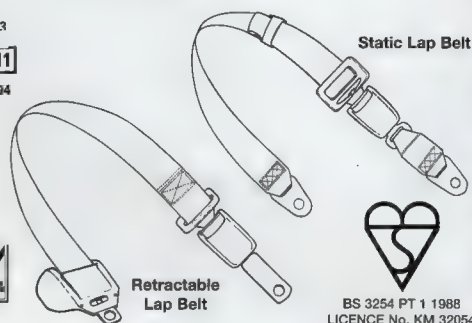
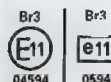
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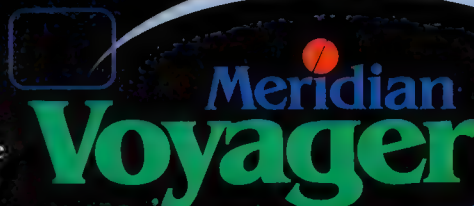
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friendly business approach". – Peter O'Neill, The Kings Ferry.*

CBW seminar 'should be compulsory'

Putting profit-earning ideas into practice

ATTENDANCE at a CBW Coaching for Profit seminar is "excellent value" and "should be compulsory for every operator in the coach industry".

That's the reaction of Bill Courtney, of Courtney Coaches, Bracknell, after the second seminar at Volvo's superb Warwick conference facilities.

With presentations from industry experts, this was the opportunity to learn how others have put excellent profit-earning ideas into practice. Speakers were: Go Whittle managing director and Confederation of Passenger Transport president-elect, Ron Whittle; Ensign Motor Policies underwriter, John Neal; Epsom Coaches operations director, Steve Whiteway; and Tappins Coaches managing director, Paul Tappin.

Their combined message was that quality is the route to profit confirming for Mr Courtney that it is a big mistake to "go chasing around after silly prices."

This theme was established in the keynote address by Peloton Management director, Roger Batson. Wightlink general sales manager, Chris Wales, kept the question-and-answer sessions on course and ensured that all those in attendance got value for money.

However, it was Ron Whittle's thought-provoking cross-examination of costing and cost control which guaranteed that the day's seminar kept profit in focus. After setting the scene with a costing spreadsheet that showed how variables such as average mileage influenced costs per mile, Mr Whittle challenged his audience to think of coaching as "a selling business, not a quoting business."

He claimed that the margin for cutting prices was very small - perhaps five or 10 per

By Mike Morgan

cent. Consequently, he commended his practice of quoting a price per head rather than a price per coach. He said: "As an industry we should move to quoting a price per head. There is so much merit that it is amazing we haven't done it."

For those who believed their attempts to charge realistic rates would be undermined by the operator down the road with lower overheads and a limited appreciation of operations costs, Mr Whittle had words of comfort. "I'm convinced the situation is changing."

"It is absolutely nonsensical that prices can be cut by up to 50 per cent. But the time is coming when the old fleets will have to come off the road."

"Around 44 per cent of coaches are over 12 years old - that's around 8,000. However, if you look around the dealers' yards, there are no more than 200 second-hand vehicles under eight years old."

Mr Whittle's conclusion is



Talkback: Ron Whittle together with Paul Tappin and Steve Whiteway, answer operators' questions



Delegates learned how quality is the route to profit

that operators running old coaches will either go out of business or cut their fleet size. Either way "the supply and demand situation will change."

Insurance featured as one of the variable costs on Mr Whittle's tables. Underwriter John Neal picked up on the opportunity to advise on how this cost could be kept under control.

The central theme of his presentation was risk management. "Claims costs are the biggest single determinant of premiums," he said and gave pointers as to how the number of accidents could be reduced.

The afternoon session concentrated on revenue rather than costs.

Steve Whiteway pitched his 'Quality in People' talk firmly in the quality arena. "There's always a market for quality and staffing is the key," he said.

Pointing to the coach operator's two important assets, the coach and its driver, his assertion was that the driver is perhaps the most important. "It's no good if you have a driver with a t-shirt and an attitude problem."

Although he questions why drivers are paid so little, Mr Whiteway stressed that investment in people does not necessarily mean higher pay.

Paul Tappin gave some examples of how his company made profit from added value. He said: "Add high value to your product - after all, it's what you earn from the coach that matters."

"What you need is a method of being different. Find a new product that other people cannot easily copy."

Among Mr Tappin's latest ventures is a day trip to Brittany using a hired plane from Bournemouth airport. There's the risk that the tour will not run and money be lost but, with potential earnings in excess of £500 per coach per day for the short run from Didcot, it indicates the rewards are worth chasing.

● The next Coaching for Profit seminar is scheduled for 16 November. For details ring CBW on 01733 63100. **CBW**



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▼ Maintenance

'High-profile' operator has O-licence curtailed

Authorisation cut from nine to six and duration reduced to end of year



BYRON John's O-licence authorisation has been cut from nine to six coaches and the duration reduced to the end of the year by South Wales traffic commissioner John Mervyn Pugh.

The commissioner said he looked on the case as "very serious" in view of the high profile that had been sought and enjoyed. Mr John, of 71 Lucy Road, Skewan, Neath, West Glamorgan,

The commissioner said he looked on the case as "very serious" in view of the high profile that had been sought and enjoyed

who trades as Byron's Coaches, had gone for that high profile, with trade magazine articles and winning a Daily Express award.

For Mr John, David Cocks said one prohibition had been imposed because inspection traps in the floor were insecure. That had occurred when an outside electrical contractor was carrying out work and had replaced the traps the wrong way round.

He accepted the vehicle had not been thoroughly

by Michael Jewell

checked over before being put back into service. Adverse publicity in the national press arose after a vehicle on a day outing was inspected at a service station and found to have an oil leak. The party of school dinner ladies it was carrying had a two-hour wait for a replacement coach.

The maintenance problems had started when the fleet

engineer left 12 months ago, said Mr Cocks. They had recently moved into Shearings' former premises in Skewan.

Mr Pugh said the problem with operators seeking publicity, believing that a high-profile would attract people to use their services, was that the standard expected had to be no less than the finest in the world because they were more in the public eye.

He was repeatedly finding

that older operators persisted with maintenance systems of their own, seeming to "poo-poo" lots of the ideas that emanated from the Traffic Area and the Vehicle Inspectorate, said the commissioner. Their attitude was "I know what I am doing - that's a lot of modern nonsense," and they carry on as in the past.

Mr John agreed that was fair comment.

Mr Pugh said he had come

He was repeatedly finding older operators seemed to "poo-poo" lots of ideas that emanated from the Traffic Area and VI



John Mervyn Pugh: high standards expected of operators

to as lenient a decision as he could, as there were a number of mitigating circumstances. He accepted that, if the oil was checked before the vehicle found to have the oil leak left, it could have developed during the journey.

However, he was not happy that the checks had been as thorough as they ought to have been. He directed that the renewal of the licence be considered at a further public inquiry.

▼ Maintenance

Commissioner roars at Welsh Dragon



A SERIOUS warning was given to Alan Barrington Smith at a Cardiff disciplinary inquiry before South Wales traffic commissioner John Mervyn Pugh. Mr Barrington Smith, of 436 Corporation Road, Newport, Gwent, who trades as Welsh Dragon Travel, holds an O-licence for four single deckers and one double decker.

The commissioner said an immediate prohibition had been placed on a vehicle last October when two out of 10 wheelnuts were

found not to be tight. During a spot check in May another vehicle was found to have a fuel leak and an insecure seat.

For Mr Barrington Smith, Norman Lloyd-Edwards said they had been surprised that the prohibition was varied when the vehicle was presented for clearance at the test station, as it had been inspected by Newport Corporation. Mr Barrington Smith was not in the best of health at present. He had obtained the services of former vehicle examin-

er Mervyn Taylor, who had overseen a great improvement at the garage. The vehicles were now inspected every four weeks and they had all been put through fresh MoT tests. Mr Smith conceded he had fallen down on administration through trying to run the buses and the fitting side.


Issuing the warning, Mr Pugh said: "It would be tragic if your licence had to be revoked because of ill health - you have the most noble name in Wales."



▼ **Licensing**

Renewal turned down because of finance fears

Two-vehicle international licence sought

 THE renewal of David Ashby's O-licence was refused by South Eastern & Metropolitan traffic commissioner Brigadier Michael Turner at an Eastbourne public inquiry because he was not satisfied about Mr Ashby's financial position.

Mr Ashby, of 107 Lynmouth Road, Walthamstow, London, had been seeking the renewal of his two-vehicle international licence. Brigadier Turner also adjourned for a month an application by Mr Ashby's son Philip, of the same address, for a new international licence authorising the operation of two vehicles after he failed to prove to the commissioner's satisfaction that

he was of adequate financial standing.

DoT vehicle examiner Bernard Moggeridge said he had inspected one vehicle during a maintenance investigation, issuing one defect notice. Since 1991, one delayed and four immediate prohibition notices had been issued to David Ashby's vehicles, including one issued by a police vehicle examiner. Defects listed included an emergency door device not working, faulty brakes and fuel leaks.

David Ashby had been unable to produce any inspection records at the time of his investigation, said Mr Moggeridge.

Producing inspection records, David Ashby said he had



Brigadier Michael Turner: 'An O-licence is not transferable'


stopped trading in September 1994 but had allowed his son to use his licence, remaining with him to act as his transport manager.

Pointing out that an O-licence was not transferable, Brigadier Turner said that clearly Philip Ashby had been operating illegally. David Ashby was still re-

sponsible, as licence holder, for ensuring the licence conditions were not broken, including those relating to the keeping of vehicles in a roadworthy condition. He would consider what action to take over the unauthorised operation when the hearing into Philip Ashby's application was continued.

▼ **Maintenance**

Authorisation cut to two vehicles

 ELTHAM Coaches O-licence authorisation was cut to two vehicles at an Eastbourne disciplinary inquiry before South Eastern & Metropolitan traffic commissioner Brigadier Michael Turner.

Brian, Katherine and Den-

DoT vehicle examiner Peter Lanckmans said faults found included part of the trim sticking up, and oil and fuel leaks

were no further problems.

DoT examiner Peter Lanckmans said he had carried out a fleet inspection in June, issuing one immediate prohibition and one defect notice. Faults found included part of the trim sticking up, oil and fuel leaks.

Since then a further immediate prohibition notice had been issued on 2 September, when a tyre was found to be below the legal limit and the vehicle emitting excess smoke. Mr Lanckmans also expressed worries about the maintenance procedures and facilities.

Brigadier Turner decided not to take account of a further prohibition issued by the police after Colin Ward, for the firm, disputed the measurements of wear. The commissioner expressed concern about the firm's annual test failure rate, pointing out that one vehicle had failed its

initial test three years in a row.

He also expressed concern about a vehicle which had been sent into Maidstone & District for repair and was subsequently found to be defective when inspected by Mr Lanckmans the following day. He said the partners seemed to think the Vehicle Inspectorate ought to inform them what maintenance procedures to adopt, but that was not part of the VI's function.

Mr Ward said many changes aimed at improving maintenance were in the process of taking place. New electric lift hoists would be installed within two months and a member of the family was going to attend a vehicle inspection course. The driver defect reporting system was also being tightened up. Vehicles would still be sent to Maidstone & District for repair.

The firm, which had been

operating since 1981, had a good record until recently, stressed Mr Ward. The results of the examiner's inspection had come as a "rude shock" but the "learning curve" since June had been rapid.

Indicating he was not fully satisfied, Brigadier Turner said

The results of the examiner's inspection had come as a 'rude shock' but the "learning curve" since June had been rapid

nis Nash, trading as Eltham Coaches, of 5 Keynsham Road, Eltham, London, were also seeking the renewal of their three-vehicle O-licence, and Brigadier Turner said he was minded to renew it from 9 October if there

he was concerned that 70 per cent of the firm's work was contract work, carrying old-age pensioners and school children. Dangerous passenger carrying vehicles could not be passed over.

CBW

▼ Drivers' Hours

Zamir application adjourned over possible Al Hamid link

Brother of former Burton Bus Co operator denies any connection



A BID for a new licence by Nasir Zamir and Masaud Khan, trading as Zamir Coaches, of Burton upon Trent, Staffs, has been adjourned by West Midland traffic commissioner, John Mervyn Pugh, because he is concerned about their possible associations with Andre Al Hamid.

The partners, of 190 Uxbridge Street, Burton upon Trent, Staffordshire, are seeking a restricted licence authorising the operation of two minibuses.

In December 1993 the 14-vehicle licence held by Mr Al

(CBW, 7 August 1993).

Questioned by the commissioner, Nasir Zamir said he had never been involved in PSV operation before. The handwriting on the application form was his. That on a second document shown to him was Mr Khan's. Mr Khan, who was not present, had never been involved in PSV operation before either.

Mr Pugh pointed out the document Mr Zamir had confirmed was in Mr Khan's handwriting was, in fact, the application form submitted by Mr Al Hamid.

Mr Zamir said Mr Al Hamid no longer lived in this country. Mr Pugh said Mr Khan must have been involved with Mr Al Hamid but Mr Zamir said he did not know anything about that. Mr Khan had gone to Pakistan for three weeks to see his son who was ill.

Questioned further, Mr Zamir admitted Mr Al Hamid was his brother.

He said he was aware his brother used to have a licence. He, himself, had been working away in London at the time. He had heard his brother's business

had closed down due to certain things that happened in the company, but he did not know the full story.

Mr Pugh said he was not prepared to grant a licence without first having the opportunity to question Mr Khan.

He needed to be satisfied the two licences were in no way connected. At the moment, it seemed the licence being asked for was to follow on the one held by Mr Zamir's brother.

Denying that was so, Mr Zamir said his brother had nothing to do with the present applica-

Questioned further, Mr Zamir admitted Mr Al Hamid was his brother. He said he was aware his brother used to have a licence

Hamid, trading as Burton Bus Co, was revoked by deputy traffic commissioner Roger Seymour because he was not satisfied Mr Al Hamid had adequate finance to maintain his buses in a safe condition, or tax and insure them properly (CBW, 27 November, 1993).

Mr Al Hamid is the son of Mohammed Zamir, whose own 14-vehicle licence was revoked at the same time Mr Al Hamid's licence was granted in July 1993

FLASHBACK: to Coach and Bus Week, 27 November 1993

Mr Pugh said it seemed the licence being asked for was to follow on the one held by Mr Zamir's brother

tion. He maintained it was his own business.

Adjourning the proceedings until a date to be fixed, Mr Pugh said he required Mr Khan to attend on the next occasion and be questioned about his association with Mr Zamir's brother. If he came to the conclusion that this application was in effect Mr Zamir's brother's business being restarted, he would not grant a licence. Mr Khan was the common link.

▼ Licence

Bid for international licence refused



AN application for an international licence for four single deckers and two minibuses by R S Motors Tipton Ltd, of Coneygre Industrial Estate, Tipton, West Midlands, was refused by West Midland

traffic commissioner John Mervyn Pugh when the company failed to appear at a Birmingham public inquiry.

The hearing had earlier been adjourned because of problems over the CPC held by the

company's nominated transport manager. Mr Pugh said the case had been adjourned to enable the company to provide a proper CPC in module A for road passenger operation. The CPC produced on the last occasion had

only related to road haulage operations.

The company had not seen fit to send the required certificate or communicate with the Traffic Area. Neither was it present.

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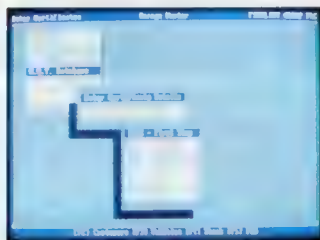
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▼ UK

Buy a licence or face the music, operators warned

Company campaigning to heighten awareness of copyright law

OPERATORS who play tapes or compact discs on long journeys should be advised that they have to obtain a licence or face the music.

Phonographic Performance Ltd (PPL) is in charge of copyright music licensing and the company is running a campaign to heighten awareness of the licence required by anyone using commercial sound recordings in their vehicles.

PPL works on behalf of nearly 1,500 UK record companies, thereby controlling the public performance and

by William Golden

broadcasting rights of around 13,000 record labels.

A spokesman said: "If you use sound recordings in public you are legally obliged to obtain a licence from the PPL — it is rather like needing a road fund licence.

"Sadly, many coach and bus operators do not realise this, or are ill-advised.

"As a result, they can end up facing legal proceedings for copyright infringement.

"The licence from

the PPL is not to be confused with the one issued by the Performing Rights Society (PRS), which works on behalf of composers.

"They own an entirely separate copyright and a PRS licence is needed in addition to one from us."

Licences have to be obtained for each coach and the cost, said the PPL spokesman, works out at just over £1.20 per vehicle per week.

One operator who was taken aback to receive a demand from the PPL is Trevor Pit-

man, the operations and tours manager of Snells Coaches, in Newton Abbot, Devon. He was told his company would have to pay £75 per vehicle a year.

Mr Pitman said: "When I got the letter I just chucked it in the bin. I had heard of the PRS but knew nothing about the PPL, so I was unaware I needed any licence for our coaches."

Details from the PPL's general licensing department at Ganton House, 14-22 Ganton Street, London W1V 1LB, tel 0171 437 0311.

▼ UK

Mealstops at resort

TAKING a group across the Channel? You can now book a mealstop at St Margaret's Bay Resort, five minutes from Dover and under 30 minutes' drive from the Le Shuttle terminal at Folkestone.

Group rates for a two-course lunch, plus coffee, start from £5.50 per person based on a minimum of 10 people. Drivers receive free meals.

The resort also has private rooms with a bar for hire and can cater for groups of up to 140. Accommodation is also available for parties of up to 46 people.

For bookings and more information contact Jacqui Smith, at St Margaret's Resort, on 01304 853262.

▼ EUROPE

P&O pullout puzzles rival

THE decision by P&O European Ferries to axe its passenger service between Felixstowe and Zeebrugge has surprised its competitor Eurolink Ferries, which is confident there is an increasing demand for direct crossings to Belgium and Holland.

P&O has blamed a 10 per cent drop in passenger numbers last year for the decision, which will mean the loss of 114 jobs. Peter Stratton, passenger sales and marketing manager, said most of the business was armed forces personnel travelling back to the UK from Germany.

"But with Army units being posted back to the UK and elsewhere in Europe, there has been a steady decline in passengers from Zeebrugge."

The two ships on

the route, *Pride of Suffolk* and *Pride of Flanders*, will be switched to a freight-only service from Felixstowe to Rotterdam at the end of the month.

Eurolink introduced a daily service from Sheerness to Vlissingen in April and the company has seen a month-on-month trebling of passenger numbers. To date, more than 100,000 reservations have been taken.

Bill Moses, Eurolink's md, said: "Our research shows - and bookings confirm - that the business is there among ferry travellers who prefer the longer and more leisurely southern North Sea/Channel crossings.

"We intend to capitalise on the withdrawal of the P&O service and attract the armed forces and coach market."



Glass act: Peter Holmes, Blue Anchor Leisure's financial director, with the East Midlands Tourist Board award (Picture: Geoff Barry PR)

▼ UK

Get hooked by Fantasy

COACH drivers should get hooked on visiting Fantasy Island now the Lincolnshire attraction is offering a new range of benefits including free fishing at two man-made lakes nearby.

The lakes will have a hard-standing area so passengers can be dropped off at Fantasy Island and drivers can head for the fishing area. The existing benefits, including meal vouchers, will still apply.

Fantasy Island, at Ingoldmells, near Skegness, is Britain's first themed

indoor family resort and has proved a phenomenal success since its end-of-May opening. Now the venue is planning to attract even more coach groups by making one of the car parks a dedicated coach park, with angled bays. There will be a drivers' restroom with TV, refreshment facilities and showers. Fantasy Island, which is owned by Blue Anchor Leisure, has been named Joint Visitor Attraction of the Year by the East Midlands Tourist Board.

CBW

▼ Europe

Le Shuttle coach traffic up by 10%

EUROTUNNEL has reported a 10 per cent increase in traffic on its Le Shuttle coach service in September, the last month of the peak holiday season.

The Channel Tunnel operator carried 3,033 coaches compared to 2,728 vehicles in August. This brings the total volume to 8,306 since Le Shuttle coach service started on 26 June.

Car figures for the same two months show a drop of 40,000 to 105,914 in September, while the freight market is slightly

by William Golden

up at 38,136 lorries, compared to 36,517 in August.

The company is hoping to improve on those figures for the rest of the year by cutting duty-free prices by a third, even though it has constantly railed against the ferry companies by accusing them of using their duty-free sales to discount ticket prices.

Eurotunnel is still involved in litigation in the European courts in a bid to scrap the duty-free

sales deal, which has been extended to 1999, but this latest move must mean that, privately, the company has conceded defeat.

Commenting on the discounting, Georges-Christian Chazot, Eurotunnel's chief executive, said: "Market leaders challenge and change existing practices."

"By returning duty-free savings to our customers, we expect to divert traffic from our competitors and create business based on a long-term value proposition,



Spreading the word: EYC's Neil Bravey and Christine Clubley with one of the posters

▼ UK

Postcard picture

A £100,000 promotional campaign run by East Yorkshire Council has paid dividends in a marked increase in visitors to the resort of Bridlington this Summer.

A feature of the campaign was a series of posters featuring characters from traditional seaside postcards, which adorned the sides of buses in the region.

Its aim was to spread

the word about the £20 million investment in Bridlington, which has involved a major redevelopment of the seafront and town centre.

Neil Bravey, director of commercial development and tourism for East Yorkshire Council, said: "The results are marvellous and have shown that all the time effort and money we have invested in our resort has been worth-



Making waves: Mr Blobby gives Southern Tourist Board md John Slater some advice on how to pull in the crowds

▼ UK

Pushing boat out for exhibition

GROUP organisers got an early taste of what's on offer in the south and east of England next year when four tourist boards pushed the boat out in London.

They were promoting Excursions 96, the leading one-day group travel exhibition organised by the regional tourist boards of East Anglia, London, Southern and South East England.

The event was held aboard the Hydrospace

Alpha, a new sightseeing vessel owned by Catamaran Cruisers, which runs trips up and down the Thames from Charing Cross Pier.

Special guests included Mr Blobby, who is resident at the Crinkley Bottom Castle at Pleasurewood Hills theme park in Suffolk; Queen Elizabeth 11, from the Oxford Story; and Mr Sunshine, representing Eastbourne.

More than 200 exhibitors will be at

Excursions 96, which will be held at Wembley on Thursday 18 January, from 10.30am to 4.30pm. They will be giving details of new initiatives and special offers at historic houses and gardens, museums, theme parks and other attractions.

Anyone wishing to attend should contact Jackie Allen, at the East Anglia Tourist Board, Toppesfield Hall, Hadleigh, Suffolk IP7 5DN.

CEW

▼ UK

Biss to address seminar

ADELE Biss, the chairman of the British Tourist Authority and the English Tourist Board, will give the opening keynote address to the fifth annual seminar organised by the British Association of Tourism Officers and the ETB.

The three-day seminar will be held in Bournemouth from Wednesday 18 October and will cover key areas of modern tourism, including information technology and the relationship between tourism and the environment.

The other principal speaker will be Lord Underwood, the parliamentary under secretary of state at the Department of National Heritage.

Your bus or coach has the builder's name on it.

But the best all round replacement glass option for it has ours.



We have been aware for some time of suggestions, circulating within the industry, that PSV Glass products are in some way inferior to what body builders refer to as "genuine OEM" glass.

This is simply not so.

In truth, there is no sensible reason why any UK operator, irrespective of the type or make of vehicles on their fleet, should allow themselves to be persuaded that the best replacement glass should either carry the name of the original body builder, or be a so called "genuine OEM" part.

Just check the facts and you will see what we mean.

FACT. No bus or coach builder manufactures their own glass. Without exception, they buy from glass processors who shape and treat the glass to produce windscreens and side windows.

FACT. PSV Glass does not manufacture its own glass products, but buys direct from glass processors throughout Europe, many of whom also supply glass parts to body builders.

FACT. When bus and coach builders sell these glass products to operators and fitters they describe them as "genuine OEM" parts.

FACT. European Union regulations require that glass processors meet a very specific quality standard, irrespective of whether they are supplying body builders or PSV Glass. They have no option.

FACT. This quality standard is E43r.

FACT. To comply with EU regulations, operators have to fit glass parts that comply with E43r. They have no option.

FACT. To comply with E43r, glass has to be manufactured from the highest quality materials. Therefore, there can be NO differences in technical or safety terms between PSV Glass's E43r products and those E43r products which body builders describe as "genuine OEM".

FACT. The only significant difference between "genuine OEM" glass parts and PSV Glass parts is the route by which they get to the operator. PSV Glass parts do not go via the body builder.

Now you know the facts, do not be misled into thinking that the best replacement glass only comes from the body builder.

In fact, your best option has our name on it.

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PSV
GLASS

▼ UK

Holiday Inn plans Express

HOLIDAY Inn has moved into the UK's expanding budget hotel market by announcing plans to introduce its Holiday Inn Express brand here.

The company has tied up an agreement with fellow Bass subsidiary, Bass Taverns, to build 12 Express budget hotels across the country, with room rates fixed at well under £50. The price will include Continental breakfast.

The first hotel should open next year and there are plans for a further 20 Express hotels to be built under a franchise deal with Hospitality Developments. All Express hotels will have limited facilities so they will be located near Bass taverns and other urban leisure outlets.

In all, there are 300 Holiday Inn Express hotels worldwide, the vast majority of which are in the United States, where the company has been operating since 1993. There is just one in Europe - in Germany - but there are plans to build another 20 in that country and a similar number in Poland.

▼ UK and Europe

Expansion means Great Days for tour wholesaler

Tenth anniversary marked by open days and new departments

by William Golden

IT was standing room only at the Altrincham offices of Greatdays when the wholesaler marked its 10th anniversary by holding two open days earlier this month.

To mark the occasion, the Cheshire company officially opened its new courtyard sales and marketing centre and marketing and development department and announced details of its new aviation department and the opening of a London office.

More than 120 representatives of coach companies, hotel groups and ferry companies attended on each day - 3 and 4 October. Sales director Paul Beaumont said: "This development has been more than six

months and it shows our commitment to tour support and quality control. We do all the planning for our customers and we have 24-hour phone lines to deal with any problems.

"The open days are an ideal way to show existing and potential clients the full range of services we offer."

Greatdays has dedi-

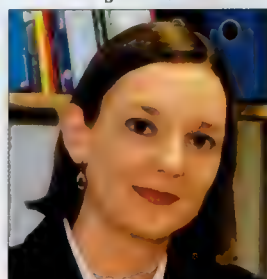


New faces: Les James and Jane Metcalfe

cated UK and Continental sales teams and is one of three preferred reservation centres for on-site accommodation at Disneyland Paris.

Jane Metcalfe, who used to work for the British Council, has been appointed marketing and development manager, while Les James is heading the new aviation department.

Mr James, who will



be handling all group inquiries and reservations, has been involved in tourism since 1969, when he worked as a tour guide in Spain and the Balearic Islands. In 1975 he moved to Shearings and then worked for Joe Walsh Tours, in Manchester, before setting up Air-tours Holidays in 1981, where he was md and chief executive.

In 1987 Les jointly set up Leisureline (Travel) Ltd, in Cheadle, and worked as a freelance travel consultant before joining Greatdays.

The new London office, which will open in Westminster in early November, will be run by John Marks, who has 23 years in the travel business.

▼ Europe

Botel gets preferred status again

BOTEL Services Ltd, the Rotherham-based tour wholesaler, has been granted another preferred wholesale partner accolade to add to its impressive portfolio. North Sea Ferries is the latest operator to

give the wholesaler preferred status and, to mark the deal, Botel has launched a new brochure featuring Belgium, Holland and Germany via North Sea Ferries' Hull to Rotterdam and Zeebrugge routes. The

launch coincided with Coach & Bus 95 at which Botel was exhibiting.

Details from Kevin, David or Steve on 01709 703535 (fax 01709 703525), or Botel South on telefax 01303 875336.

CBW



WEATHER

City	Average temperature last week	City	Average temperature last week
Athens	25C/77F	Madrid	22C/72F
Amsterdam	17C/63F	Oslo	14C/57F
Berlin	20C/68F	Paris	18C/64F
Brussels	17C/63F	Rome	24C/75F
Dublin	14C/57F	Stockholm	15C/59F
Lisbon	24C/75F	Vienna	18C/64F
Luxembourg	13C/55F	Zurich	21C/70F

DIESEL PRICES

Country	Diesel price per litre in Sterling	Country	Diesel price per litre in Sterling
Austria	0.57	Netherlands	0.53
Belgium	0.53	Norway	0.69
Eire	0.53	Poland	0.23
France	0.49	Portugal	0.45
Germany	0.50	Spain	0.44
Italy	0.54	Sweden	0.61
Luxembourg	0.44	Switzerland	0.66

(Courtesy AA Roadwatch)

HOLIDAY POUND

Country	Currency exchange rate	Country	Currency exchange rate
Austria	15.40 Sch/£	Italy	2,515 Lire/£
Belgium	45.20 BFr/£	Netherlands	2.48 Gld/£
Denmark	8.60 K/£	Norway	9.75 NKr/£
Eire	0.96 Punt/£	Portugal	231 Es/£
France	7.61 Fr/£	Spain	190 Pta/£
Germany	2.20 DM/£	Sweden	10.93 SKr/£
Greece	361 D/£	Switzerland	1.76 SFr/£

If you have ever had doubts about the quality of PSV Glass products, here's your chance to eliminate them.

The PSV Glass Challenge

Despite the facts, there still seems to be those who have doubts about the quality of the products supplied by PSV Glass.

If you are one of these people, or would simply like to check out the quality and range of the products we supply, visit our stand at Coach & Bus 95 (stand D53/F8) and take up our challenge.

Compare four pairs of laminated windscreens and tell us, if you can, what the differences are and you could win £2,000 of Thomas Cook Worldwide Travel Vouchers.

In addition, all correct and completed entries will win a £100 voucher, redeemable against a single order for PSV Glass replacement glass parts worth £500* or more.

Our Glass Challenge is a great opportunity to clear up any doubts you may have, and have a bit of fun into the bargain.

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& BUS
95**

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Airmail	1 year's subscription	£147

IT IS IMPORTANT TO ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS. THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP.

YOUR COMPANY DETAILS

1. What is your primary job title?

(Tick one only)

Owner/Director.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 01
Senior/General Manager.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 02
Engineering/Service Manager.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 03
Other, (please specify).....	<input type="checkbox"/> 04

2. What is your company's main business function?

Bus Operator.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 01
Coach Operator.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 05
Coach & Bus Operator.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 02
Local Government.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 03
Other (please specify).....	<input type="checkbox"/> 04

3. How many vehicles does your company own/operate?

(Tick all that apply)

	Buses	Coaches
1-5.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 01	<input type="checkbox"/> 10
6-10.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 02	<input type="checkbox"/> 11
11-15.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 03	<input type="checkbox"/> 12
16-25.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 04	<input type="checkbox"/> 13
26-39.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 05	<input type="checkbox"/> 14
40-100.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 06	<input type="checkbox"/> 15
101-400.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 07	<input type="checkbox"/> 16
401-1000.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 08	<input type="checkbox"/> 17
1000 +.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 09	<input type="checkbox"/> 18

4. Do you have responsibility for the recommendation/ purchase and/or specification of the following?

(Tick all that apply)

	Pur	Spec	Rec
Vehicles.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 01	<input type="checkbox"/> 12	<input type="checkbox"/> 23
Parts/Spares.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 02	<input type="checkbox"/> 13	<input type="checkbox"/> 24
Oil/Fuel.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 03	<input type="checkbox"/> 14	<input type="checkbox"/> 25
Breakdown/Recovery.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 04	<input type="checkbox"/> 15	<input type="checkbox"/> 26
Insurance/Finance.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 05	<input type="checkbox"/> 16	<input type="checkbox"/> 27
Fuel Cards.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 06	<input type="checkbox"/> 17	<input type="checkbox"/> 28
Training.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 07	<input type="checkbox"/> 18	<input type="checkbox"/> 29
Venue/Attraction Tickets.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 08	<input type="checkbox"/> 19	<input type="checkbox"/> 30
Ferry Crossings.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 09	<input type="checkbox"/> 20	<input type="checkbox"/> 31
Hotel Bookings.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 10	<input type="checkbox"/> 21	<input type="checkbox"/> 32
Theatre Tickets.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 11	<input type="checkbox"/> 22	<input type="checkbox"/> 33
Other, (please specify).....	<input type="checkbox"/> 34		

5. What type of work does your company undertake?

(Tick all that apply)

Private Hire.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 01
Day Excursions.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 02
British Tours.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 03
European Tours.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 04
Local Government Contracts.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 05
Emergency/Breakdown Services.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 06

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Signed

Name:

Job title

Company:.....

Address

.....

Postcode.....

Tel:

Return to: Mark Barton, Coach and Bus Week, EMAP Response Publishing Ltd, Wentworth House, Wentworth Street, Peterborough PE1 1DS.



Drive the business: 'It is planning for profits which makes them happen, not working like a slave'

Think, not work, your way to making greater level of profit

I AM convinced there are many in the industry who like to believe the sun never really set on the golden era of coach operation. And that, despite little setbacks, just continuing to do what has always been done will make things turn out right in the end.

It appears to have gone unnoticed that the little setbacks have meant working harder to, at the best, stand still; that the age profile of the fleet is growing older and older; and that these little setbacks have actually caused the demise of more than a few coach operations.

Perhaps I am inherently lazy but I do not want to be working harder as I get older. I certainly do not want to be out driving morning, noon and night, day after day. If that were all the future I could see as a coach operator, I would go and drive for someone else - and not have all the responsibility of running a business, not have my money at risk, not have my house in hock to the bank to secure an overdraft, and not have the prob-

lems of employing others.

Happily, I abandoned regular coach driving long ago, for I realised that, while I could do the job of a driver, no driver could do mine. If my business was to develop, to grow, to succeed and to prosper, it would only do so if I applied myself to driving the business, not a coach.

Hard work, it is said, never killed anyone. That may be true, but I would add that

there is a difference between working hard and hard work. I have yet to meet the man who was seriously rich because of a lifetime of hard, physical, work. I do not think he exists.

All the evidence I see points inexorably to one conclusion: it is the brain that delivers wealth - not brawn. It is planning for profits which makes them happen, not working like a slave. It is having the vision of where we plan to be in five or ten years — and working out the steps necessary to get there — which ensures a reasonably rosy future, not leaving it to chance.

Consequently, I have never been content to leave my business to drift along where the tide will take it. I must steer it away from problem areas and into potential profits. This involves knowing where the pitfalls may occur and where the rewards are to be found.

This does mean reading serious news and working out its implications. It necessitates absorbing information and even statistics on market trends, considering the effect on my business, and then acting accordingly. It



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Think about it!



Think, not work, your way to greater profits

►►► does mean taking stock of what the competition is doing, not to undercut them on price, but to weigh up what share of existing and developing markets I can expect to capture.

That big dose of How to Succeed in Business by Thinking Instead of Working is a scene-setter for a thought I am going to share with you about a gigantic opportunity in 1996 from which coach operators can benefit: from 1 January, 1996 TESSAS (a tax exempt savings scheme set up five years ago) begin to come to maturity.

So what! I hear from those who are waiting for the new dawn of coaching to appear as if by magic. Perhaps it has, for those prepared to seek out the crock of gold at the end of the rainbow!

The simple facts are these: savers have been able, over the last five years and subject to annual limits, to build up a maximum of £9,000 cash in a TESSA account (strictly only one per person). The interest earned on this investment has been tax free.

Millions of people have taken advantage of this and mega-millions are now invested in TESSA accounts. In round terms, the £9,000 invested will be worth £12,000 on maturity, which will be in 1996 for those who

joined early.

The Government has announced that individuals will be able to re-invest the capital sum - up to £9,000 - in another TESSA, but not the accrued interest. This means that lots and lots of individuals will have £3,000 worth of interest burning a hole in their pocket - or £6,000 for a couple. It is likely to be a good year for double glazing salesmen, vendors of conservatories, furniture companies and cruise operators. It could even put a little spark in the housing market.

It is not the car, but all of these things, and more besides, that are competitors of the coach. If we can offer a holiday which looks more tempting than a conservatory, we can share in this bonus.

If we can offer a package of mini-breaks that will give more pleasure than a new set of dining room furniture, some of this bounty will fall into our treasure chest.

There are suitcases full of notes and mini-mountains of gold coins waiting for us - if only we can work out how to get our hands on them. Not much of it is going to flow in the direction of those who serve up more of the same and hope for buyers. Our product, our marketing and our sales approach needs

to be alluring to those who will have this disposable cash.

Some, perhaps many, of them will never have been on a coach holiday - or perhaps even a coach, in their lives. We, therefore, need to make them connect their TESSA surplus with spending it with us.

I have reached the point where I think I have shared enough with all of you - if I tell the world my plan to pluck this particular golden goose, my portion may be seriously diminished. Sufficient to say that there is a lot of scope for 'Golden Tessa' holidays and 'TESSA Bonus' breaks, slogans and competitions themed around TESSA.

By way of example, I'll give you two ideas which I am not planning to use myself.

Firstly, a slogan or advert/brochure header: "Better than TESSA - Invest in a tax-free holiday - plenty of interest guaranteed."

Secondly, something like a free holiday to the winner of a slogan competition: "I would spend part of my TESSA interest with Marksmen Coaches because (not more than 20 words)".

It's wonderful how much can be earned by just a bit of thought. It beats hard work hands down!

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Rain no longer stops play: consumer spending patterns have changed

Let's hope somewhere's staying open out of season

WHILE private hire and contract-only coach operators still have to try to earn a year's income over a limited season, those operating excursions and tours in an imaginative way have benefited from a change in consumer spending patterns which has made excursion and tour operation an all-year activity.

It is only a pity the UK tourism industry has not seen there are profits to be taken in what was once out of season. Indeed, it seems worse than that — some attractions and catering establishments seem to be putting up the shutters earlier than they used to.

I was in Bridlington on a beautiful day in the third week of September - and discovered many places already closed. I have not been to the Isle of Wight recently but it is somewhere with huge out-of-season potential yet which all but puts up a sign 'Island Closed for Winter!'. I hope this trend will not continue, otherwise our new-found out-of-season trade may be affected. **CBW**

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That'll be ten bob...

IF only all passengers were as honest as a man from Switzerland who, around 1977, spent two years fare-dodging on the buses.

At the time, he was a penniless student but almost 20 years later, having got over his impecuniosity, he got an attack of guilt which gnawed away at him. Unable to bear it any longer, he sent £100 to Warwick Hillman, md at Victoria Coach Station.

"I wrote back to him and thanked him for his honesty," said Mr Hillman. We want to know what Mr Hillman did with the hundred quid...

No training trouble in Toronto

WHEN a *CBW* diarist climbed aboard a Toronto Transit Commission bus a few weeks ago, he didn't bargain on getting a real-life demonstration of the effectiveness of the organisation's staff training (*CBW*, 7 October).

OK, posters inside the bus announced that the 'operator' (North American for driver) was

highly trained but, aside from his ability to steer a 40ft GMC with three fingers, there was no evidence of this. Until, that is, two black teenagers climbed aboard and refused to pay the \$1 flat fare.

The driver simply pulled up at the kerb, cut the engine and asked them to leave. They refused, and he called control and summoned

the police. He just stood there, arms folded, and repeated his request for them to leave. By now, other passengers were getting involved, offering to pay the teenagers' fare, the youths goading the driver with taunts about racism.

"I don't have to let you ride. I am using my discretion, as detailed within the parameters laid down by the Toronto

Transit Commission," he said calmly. 'Discretion'? 'Parameters'? Have you ever heard a British bus driver use these words?

The police arrived, the teenagers were ejected, the journey continued. If the driver's handling of the situation, without the protection of assault screens, was typical there must be lessons for training on this side of the pond.

A Pizzaland sales drive

THE press release says "A Scottish bus driver got a tasty surprise when he pulled up in Kilmarnock."

The surprise was not, as you might assume from the picture, the blonde waitress but the pizza she's holding - handed out for free to a startled Robert Cairns and his passengers as the bus arrived at its stop in Titchfield Street.

It was all a publicity stunt to advertise the presence of Scotland's 20th Pizzaland. Crowning the celebration, Scots golfer Gordon Sherry chipped a golf ball through a 14-inch pizza.



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So is the bus operator en route for success? Absolutely. Based on the Ford Transit 230 standard or extended chassis, Devon Coachbuilds are constructed to last, which makes them extremely affordable. And with a host of safety features including three point all-age seat belts, they have already received wide acclaim. So who IS missing out?

Perhaps you are. If you haven't already seen one of the new coachbuilds, or know enough details, ring Beverley Jackson on 01392 211611 and ask for a brochure.

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Mintex does a double take on sexploitation

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"The calendars that we shoot do not degrade women, but show them in a positive and sensuous way," said Michele Gray of Mintex. So positive, in fact, that the 42,000 calendars printed last year at £15 a throw sold out, and a repeat performance is expected this year.

We're sure you could get similar sales for a 'one for the ladies' calendar featuring the Coachendales - Dreamboy Drivers. The only problem might be mustering up a dozen with the right physique. Prospective models can send a snap to....

Slow start for new bus station

REPTILES and amphibians seem to make a habit of kyboshing building projects.

Here in Peterborough, home of *CBW*, the building of an entire township was bamboozled by the discovery of great crested newts in some ditchwater. The developers were halted in their tracks, though many residents

were secretly pleased. The newts had done what scores of objectors had failed to achieve, albeit temporarily.

Nottingham's Victoria Centre car park and bus station is the latest victim. No sooner had the earthmovers descended on the site than 30 slow-worms were discovered. Time was

when every schoolboy had a pet slow-worm in his pocket. Now, these legless lizards are very rare, and protected to boot.

So, a £6.7 million contract had to wait while East Midlands environment consultant Andrew Baker removed the reptiles and put them in some tanks in his garage.

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LETTER OF THE WEEK



Standard for fitting of belts is in existence



From Peter Hilton

We note with great interest, if not some dismay, the continuing confusion over the fitment of seatbelts. As you are probably aware, Shearings took the decision to fit lap type belts to 319 vehicles during late 1994 and 1995.

Before undertaking the fitment, a considerable amount of consultation was undertaken with the vehicle manufacturers, Department of Transport, seatbelt suppliers and local Vehicle Inspectorate. The conclusion we came to was that a definite standard is in existence. However, the politicians were reluctant to enforce this standard.

The standard of fitment I refer to is EEC directive 76/115 which is referred to in Construction and Use Section 46, 47 and defines objectively the level of loading a seat, seatbelt and seat fixing must sustain before failure.

The loading level is 5.5g and required to be verified by calculation and component testing. It is this directive that has applied to the fitment of seatbelts to exposed seats in existing vehicles since 1988.

Clearly the onus is on the vehicle and seat manufacturers to verify that the installation complies with 76/115 and issue a certificate of compliance, which is

required by the local certifying officer.

The above is mainly the reason why pre-1988 vehicles will, in many cases, fail to comply with 76/115 or require the vehicle manufacturers to undertake a significant amount of re-engineering and test work.

In Shearings' situation, to comply with 76/115 required a full understanding of the level of seat fixings throughout the fleet and an amount of re work to vehicles built after 1988 (no vehicles were pre-1988). The quality of seatbelts was never an issue as belts from reputable suppliers were manufactured to conform to the appropriate EEC/BSI Standards. At all stages throughout the seatbelt



Shearings: in no doubt decision to fit seatbelts was right one

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EMAP Response Publishing
Wentworth House
Wentworth Street
Peterborough PE1 1DS
or fax 01733 62656



The editor is always pleased to receive letters for publication and will, if requested, publish these anonymously. But please attach your full name (ie first name and surname) and address for our information.



Letter of the week wins a Corgi Classics model bus

exercise, we consulted with our insurers, who were satisfied that the installation was to the highest available standard and that full indemnity would be accepted.

With regard to future legislation our indications are that it will only apply to new vehicles and that EEC 76/115 will be the minimum standard applied with the possibility of three-point belts being required as a future development.

We are in no doubt, despite the cost and the current information available, that we have made the correct decision and we can confidently say that schools and private hire business has increased because of the fitment of seatbelts.

Peter Hilton
Operations manager
Shearings Limited
Wigan
Lancs

Wide of the mark

From Paul Flisher

We as a company would like to take issue with Marksman (CBW, 30 September). After his somewhat unjust statements he can only be described as an ill-informed "colleague" within the coach industry.

Tour wholesale companies in general have been well accepted by coach operators the length and breadth of the country and for our learned colleague to suddenly question their legitimacy is somewhat questionable and downright insulting.

Botel, the Rotherham-based wholesale company, takes considerable pride in the relationship it has built up with operators, who

are only too willing to buy the quality products available, and we in return see that relationship as an extension to their marketing arm. If Marksman feels we are "fat cats" living off the high profits which are supposedly gained at the operators' expense, we can assure him he is very wide of the mark! We are simply providing an all-round service which, for some operators, means from brochure production through to assisting with their cash-flow problems before the tour departs.

We are very much proactive. We seek new destinations, new ideas, and produce at great expense, brochures which in turn make marketing the coach holiday concept to the public that much easier. Of course, our buying power is greater than theirs - simply because we are negotiating on their behalf

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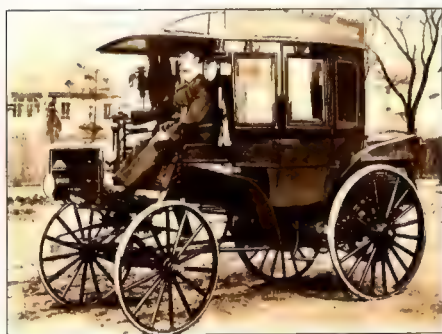
Like Marksman, we have been in business a number of years and have seen exactly how the coach industry reacts. In part it performs well, but we are also aware that all too often it loves to indulge in its favourite pastime of "shooting itself in the foot". Botel has grown to become one of the most respected wholesale companies in the UK and one only has to look at the 98 per cent repeat bookings which the company achieves year upon year, to understand that the industry needs companies like Botel to continue to improve the standard, the quality and the service which we provide to the coach industry.

Finally, it must be said that the term "middleman" can be interpreted in many ways and at Botel we certainly do not, and have not, set out to hinder the progress and growth

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of the coach industry, but to form a healthy alliance which, at the end of the day, seems to be working.

Paul Flisher
Product development/sales manager
Botel Services
Rotherham
South Yorkshire

A wholesale error

From Gerry Topiol

Marksman is guilty of a wholesale error of judgment in his comments about tour "middlemen" (CBW, 30 September).

Yes, price is important and the logistics of wholesale purchasing apply as they do in other areas of industry — a bulk purchaser would normally expect to pay less than an occasional user.

Incidentally, package prices to Paris are in some cases cheaper than they were five years ago, but could a coach operator have achieved such savings individually? I think not.

Marksman refers to the situation "some ten years ago" and that is probably where he remains with his thinking. Coach tourism has evolved at pace in the last decade and wholesalers have been at the forefront of most of

the advances and the product today is as much about service as price.

Wholesalers have brought many new destinations and products to the market, including the North Cape, Eastern Europe, the Iberian Peninsula and the Scottish Islands. The time and expense of researching and contracting properties would be beyond the means of many individual operators for reasons of time or cost.

Wholesalers can rely on economies of scale when developing new products.

The first part of Marksman's column deals with operational problems with the shuttle and the adverse effect on his profitability. He then proceeds to knock the "middlemen" without understanding just how much we actually help in this area.

The hidden costs of operating his own tours can indeed be considerable — telephone calls, faxes, rooming lists and making foreign payments at £10 or more charges for each transfer or draft.

Trading within the law ought now to be a major part of coach operators' thinking.

Wholesalers are also aware of the implications of the Package Travel Regulations and, therefore, have to be more careful in the way they contract their accommodation. Dealing with a partner in this country and not abroad is another tangible advantage, especially if something does go wrong.

In 1987 the British Association of Wholesale Tour Agents (BAWTA) was formed and today comprises 10 well known wholesale operators. Apart from recognising the need for professional codes of conduct for dealings between the wholesalers and coach operators, hotels and ferry companies, BAWTA is also concerned that their clients operate within the law.

Since its formation BAWTA has addressed some of the issues presented by the Package Travel Regulations by setting up its own Repatriation Scheme and is currently working on a standard form of contract conditions with hotels to alleviate potential problems of out bookings etc. An arbitration scheme is also in place should operators be unhappy with the conduct of one of its members.

Marksman has used his column in the past to encourage coach operators to improve their image and not be afraid to charge the right price for their services — qualities which BAWTA wholeheartedly endorses.

Now he is saying that coach tours are expensive enough compared with other forms of holiday without having to contribute to wholesalers' profits.

While he seems to be stuck in a time warp I am glad to note that *Coach and Bus Week* and *Coach Tours and Excursions* have been quick to acknowledge the role of the whole-

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saler in coach tourism. The judges' comments on last year's Coach Industry Award for Best Wholesaler would also confirm the level of professionalism we have attained in a short time — not bad for middlemen.

Gerry Topiol
Chairman

British Association of Wholesale Tour Agents
c/o Groupways Leisure
Chesham
Bucks

Copycat in my book

From Richard Delahoy

Thamesway's Bill Hiron responding to my letter about the CitySaver service (CBW, 30 September) thinks I don't like deregulation. It's certainly true I dislike the more destructive aspects of deregulation, hence my sadness.

If CitySaver is as good as he believes, perhaps he could explain why, when the service was introduced, Thamesway chose a route identical (save for very minor variations) to Southend Transport's well established X1 and why his off-peak service still leaves Southend five minutes ahead of the hourly X1. True innovation would have seen Thamesway look at different routes to London, such as the A127/ Eastwood/Rayleigh/

Wickford corridor instead of the A13, or running on the opposite half hour to the incumbent operator. It chose not to do so.

Mr Hiron says Thamesway is "keen to stay ahead" — I'm sorry, but five minutes ahead of an established hourly service spells "copycat" in my dictionary of deregulation, free on-board newspapers or not!

Richard Delahoy
Southend on Sea
Essex

Call me pessimistic...

From Paul Davies

I have read with interest various letters and articles on the pros and cons of fitting seat belts in coaches.

Working in the tourism industry as I do, and have done so since 1988, I would like to make the following points that, although from a blinkered point of view, can be applied to all or most users of coach travel.

1. Expense

The only way operators can recoup the initial cost of fitting seatbelts (and expense of subsequent maintenance) is to pass it on to their paying clients. In tourism, like most industries today, it is very dangerous to 'price yourself out of your chosen market'. It has

happened in previous years when new technology has been introduced or standards of service have increased, that a few companies put their rates up. Remember, there will always be companies willing and able to undercut you.

2. Inconvenience

The inconvenience and discomfort to clients in either sitting on or having to manoeuvre themselves while vying for a view of a sight will not please. Somehow, call me pessimistic if you wish, I can't see many foreign visitors bothering to take time (and effort) to put them on.

3. Safety

Can anyone confirm that, if the worst nightmare recurs, in an accident seatbelts are going to guarantee passenger safety and survival? I have seen various documentaries and read various features which show, one could say prove, that, in certain accidents, lap belts reduce clients' safety.

Although this letter seems to 'pooh-pooh' the whole idea of fitting seatbelts on coaches, I would be the first to applaud anything that would increase clients' safety.

Paul Davies
Edgware
Middlesex



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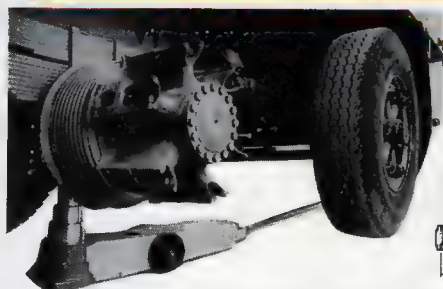
Also on display will be the recently introduced 12 metre "European" design single deck body of conventional aluminium construction mounted on a Scania L113CRL chassis. This vehicle is well placed to meet the economies demanded for the operator of the 90s and beyond.

To stimulate interest even further, a visit to the Scania stand will reveal the striking new Scania/ELC "Cityzen" double decker. Conventionally built with a design and flair for those operators who wish to reach new heights and move people in the most economical and environmentally stylish manner.



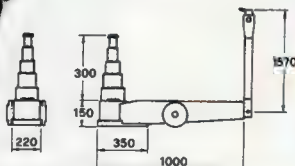
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Is gas a natural?

As the search for low emissions heats up, coach and bus operators are asking searching questions about natural gas as an alternative source of fuel. Steve Turner has some of the answers

CLEAN cheap compressed natural gas (CNG) is fast becoming leader in alternative vehicle fuels. The desire to cut business operating costs and the worsening environmental crisis has meant that vehicles powered by natural gas are being selected by some operators within the PSV industry.

Reading Buses, Ipswich Buses and Badgerline are among the pioneers.

FirstBus subsidiary, Bristol City Line, is to test a CNG-powered Plaxton Pointer-bodied Dennis Dart, the first with dedicated gas-fuel Cummins B-series engine, alongside identical spec diesel-engined buses. Its post-NEC launch signals exhaustive trials by the UK's second largest bus group to find a solution to the pressing need for an environmentally-friendly fuel - including an advanced electric power-pack using Wavepiecer's space technology.

Southampton CityBus has converted G-reg Darts to CNG power and has elected to extend the trial with 10 new additional vehicles with Pointer bodywork. The premium for gas-power has been subsidised by Hampshire County Council using EU funds.

Managing director, Ian Phillips, said: "Southampton CityBus is very much involved with and supports the move towards natural gas vehicles. We plan to have 15 NGVs on the road in 1996 which will be evaluated by the Road Research Laboratory as part of a major European initiative examining the viability of such vehicles. A full independent report will be published at the end of the evaluation period showing the financial and environmental benefits of such vehicles.

"We feel that, long term, there will be significant benefits. As an urban operator we definitely see the need for buses to be seen as the clean alternative to other forms of transport. We are certainly working towards a larger percentage of clean buses in all our city centre operations."



Pump up the volume: environment minister John Selwyn Gummer opens the CompAir Reavell/Eastern NGV refuelling station

Why Natural Gas Vehicles?

With air pollution due to vehicle traffic an increasing problem, NGVs are a clean alternative. Particulate emissions and noise levels of diesel engines can be eliminated or reduced by running on natural gas.

In a UK test, three gas-powered vehicles - Ford Transit, Ford Escort and Leyland DAF truck - completed a 900-mile journey across Britain. The three vehicles alone produced 85 kg less carbon dioxide, 4 kg less carbon monoxide and 0.4 kg less nitrogen oxide and hydrocarbons.

Tom Gorman, NGV manager at British Gas, said: "There is a general public perception that buses in the UK are net contributors to inner-city pollution, which is



often ill founded as buses tend to be among the better maintained diesel-powered vehicles.

"Bus operators, however, need to address this image and rectify what is a visible pollution problem. It is, in many ways, a social obligation. The more enlightened fleet operators are examining NGVs as a way of gaining competitive advantage with social, economic and environmentally-efficient fleets. These same operators are also very aware of local government plans in many regions to close city centres to all but clean-fuelled vehicles."

The UK's Natural Gas Vehicle Association feels the proposed Local Authority Bill, currently going through its final consultation process, could have a significant impact on public transport.

The Bill will not only empower local authorities with the monitoring and control of air pollution, it will charge them with responsibility to develop their own clean transport policies. Fred Parker, chief executive of the NGVA, believes: "The day may not be too far away where only clean vehicles are allowed into city centres. A possible scenario is the expansion of park-and-ride schemes, with private vehicles parked on city outskirts and fleets of NGV buses ferrying shoppers, working and tourists into city centres."

How do NGVs work?

The main constituent of natural gas is methane, which has a high octane value and is suitable for use in existing internal combustion engines. No new engine concepts need to be developed.

Gas requires much greater pressures and temperatures than diesel to self-ignite, so ignition can be achieved using a pilot injection of diesel with the gas. This is referred to as dual-fuel operation.

However, the favoured route for bus operators is a diesel engine converted to spark ignition for dedicated natural gas operation, giving improved performance, fuel economy and exhaust emissions.

Natural gas is slower burning than diesel resulting in reduced wear, increased engine life and longer service intervals.

Much depends on the level of tax, but natural gas can be cheaper than diesel and the industry argues that tax on gas should be reduced to the EU minimum, as is the case with petrol and diesel, instead of four times higher than the minimum, as is the case with gas. This Autumn's Budget will be examined very carefully. In addition fleet managers report fuel cost savings through the elimination of pilferage.



Up on the roof: this Southampton Citybus Ecobus has gas cylinders on the top

How safe is it?

During an arson attack on a fleet of buses in Holland, diesel and natural gas were set alight. All the gas containers vented in a controlled manner, prompting the Dutch fire authorities to comment that gas-powered buses are clearly safer than their diesel equivalents.

Gas tanks are designed for high pressure storage and far tougher than diesel tanks.

Even if gas should escape, it has a natural tendency to disperse as it is lighter than air.

How and where do I refuel?

The opening of the joint CompAir Reavell/Eastern Natural Gas facility in Ipswich brings the total of public filling stations in the UK to 10. A further 12 are planned for the next 12 months.

In broad terms there are two main filling systems - slow fill and fast fill. Both systems rely on compressors to compress the natural gas. The equipment available ranges from small compressors providing two cubic metres per hour to large units delivering over 2,000 cubic metres per hour with elaborate storage and dispensing facilities.

What is the future of NGVs?

The NGVA estimates that, with the right level of Government support, there will be some 200,000 NGVs on our roads by the end of the century. NGV development programmes are now at an advanced stage in some 40 countries. Worldwide, the most conservative observers estimate that the total number of NGVs will double over the next three years.

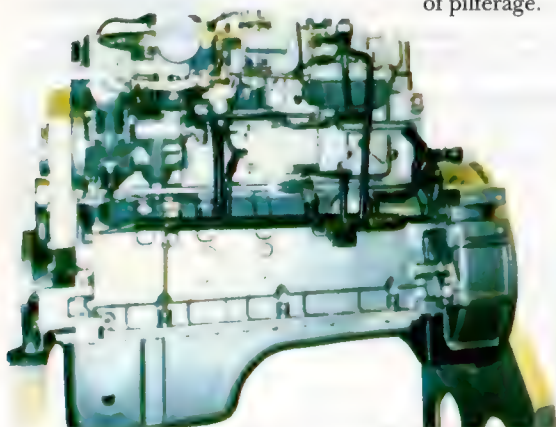
Marilyn Gelber, New York City's Environmental Protection Commissioner, confirmed at the beginning of the year that all bus purchases made by the city in 1995 would be natural gas fuelled vehicles.

"I believe that natural gas remains an excellent fuel for New York. We will continue to resist settling for cleaner gasoline and diesel fuels which still contain high levels of particulate matter and other harmful chemicals," she said.

How often are our city centre pollution problems compared to those of comparable American cities? Increasing frequently.

● Steve Turner is CompAir Reavell's compressed natural gas product consultant

CBW



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When CBW launched the second Coach industry Awards we believed it would be bigger and better than the first, but we had no idea it would be sold out almost two months before the event. Mike Morgan looks forward to another night to remember



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And that's exactly what the coach industry did. In fact you went further than that, you booked your places in record numbers. This year's Coach Industry Awards event is completely sold out, and we have warned operators to send no more cheques (CBW, 7 October).

In September we had confirmation that Bob Monkhouse was our host for the night. What had been a steady flow of bookings suddenly became a flood.

He's funny, he's clever, he's the darling of TV and he's coming to the Coach Industry Awards. It is fitting that the UK coach industry's night of the stars is graced by the UK's top TV funny man. With his unparalleled experience he is guaranteed to deliver.

Whatever mood he's in - his stage act can range from the sublime to the outrageous - he's the coach industry's own for the night.

After last year's highly successful event, we booked

the largest venue outside of London, the Metropole Hotel, NEC, Birmingham, but without a ticket confirmation your chances of being there are slim.

Applications for tickets received from last week join the queue for cancellations.

We warned when the 1995 Awards was launched that demand would inevitably outstrip supply for the presentation of our 24 awards at one of the most exciting events the industry has ever experienced. In addition, the volume of nominations has far exceeded last year. It means the competition for the winners' trophies is even more intense.

Letters have already gone out to those who are being considered by the judges for the shortlist at their first meeting next week. The next stage is to select the winners for presentation on 25 November.

Our Awards event is confirmation that the quality of service provided by the coach industry has improved dramatically over recent years. Ability to make money, improve standards and promote quality had previously gone unrewarded. But there is no going back. We have reversed the trends of an industry notoriously slow in promoting its achievement. Coaching deserves the accolades.

CBW



You're invited to drive a bus through these historic English Heritage attractions.

It's probably fair to say that English Heritage have more sites of historical interest suited to group visits than anyone else. In fact, in 1994-95, we welcomed coaches carrying more than 500,000 people, and understandably so.

English Heritage have the widest possible range of historic attractions for people of all ages and interests. Our larger properties have the facilities to ensure a smooth tour, some have restaurants, there's literature available in several languages, coach parking and most importantly helpful staff. We're expecting our major attractions to be even more popular in the coming year, with groups from home and abroad, so get planning now.

Stonehenge still ranks as the most essential group visit, and is a World Heritage Site. But you could also include a visit to **Old Sarum** nearby, with its 56 acres of Roman and Saxon ruins.

Dover Castle's 800 years of history, from medieval times to World War II, has something for everyone. And of special interest is the recently opened secret World War II Underground Hospital, deep within the famous White Cliffs, where you can experience the sights, sounds and even smells of the time.

And **Audley End**, a palace in all but name, with its "Capability" Brown landscaped parkland and elegantly furnished rooms is ideal for groups.

Another essential visit, as always, is **Battle Abbey**, built on the site of the Battle of Hastings to commemorate the most famous date in English history; 14th October, 1066. The battle can now be brought to life by innovative new audio-visual techniques.

In Cornwall, **Tintagel Castle** with its tales of Arthur and Merlin, simply has to be experienced. You might like to consider a combined visit to **Pendennis Castle**, one of Henry VIII's best preserved coastal forts.

Visitors from all over the world will want to descend on **Hadrian's Wall**, another World Heritage Site, where you will find the Roman forts and settlements of **Chesters**, **Corbridge** and **Housesteads**.

On the Isle of Wight, **Carisbrooke Castle** is ideal for a group visit in conjunction with **Osborne House**, the favourite seaside retreat of Queen Victoria.

Yorkshire has much to attract groups this year, that you may not have considered before.

There's the enormous 12th century **Scarborough Castle**, which dominates the town and

harbour. Or **Rievaulx Abbey**, situated in the secluded and peaceful Rye Valley.

Already becoming a firm favourite is the newly opened **Brodsworth Hall**. It is a very special Victorian country house and grounds, with much of its contents amazingly intact since the 1860's. With exclusive morning tours for groups, Brodsworth is certain to become one of the most popular destinations for years to come.

The same can be said of two more unique English Heritage attractions.

Stokesay Castle in Shropshire, has a beautifully preserved manor house and Jacobean gatehouse.

And in Suffolk, **Framlingham Castle's** preserved 12th century walls joining 13 towers, can be walked their entire length.

To help you plan group visits, and put together well organised tours, English Heritage have published their 1996 Group Visits Guide, with details of all sites suitable for groups, discounts, special offers, familiarisation visits and our special credit scheme.

For your free copy, call English Heritage on 0171 973 3434, or write to English Heritage, Customer Services, PO Box 9019, London W1A 0JA.



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COACH AND BUS WEEK

**COACH
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CHAPMAN Stevens has actively supported the coach and bus industry for 30 years and is among the major sponsors of the Coach Industry Awards for the first time.

Managing director, Brian Chapman said: "I congratulate CBW on the initiative they have taken and I am delighted to be sponsoring the award for the Best Tour Programme."

"The industry is often criticised for a lack of professionalism in marketing its benefits to the travelling public. The wealth of excellent tour programmes available today proves that operators are more than capable of presenting themselves and their products to their customers. The task of choosing the best programme will be a difficult one for the judges but I am certain that the eventual winner will be a credit to the industry."

Chapman Stevens' role in producing a tour pro-



Chapman: 'Congrats to CBW'

gramme is one of security and peace of mind. The law on package holidays requires operators to protect their customers' money against the risk of financial failure.

To provide low cost cover with the minimum of administration, Chapman Stevens has recently introduced its new Tour Operators' Protection Scheme.

For as little as 90p per passenger, operators can meet all their legal responsibilities without tying up their cash flow or being involved in endless paperwork.

The company's Coach Holiday Travel Scheme 1996 enables operators to provide excellent protection and peace of mind for their passengers in the event of a claim.

The policy also protects the operator against claims for holiday cancellation cost and at the same time produces a very valuable commission income.

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COACH AND BUS WEEK

**COACH
INDUSTRY
AWARDS**

1995

IN ASSOCIATION WITH
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'You can't Top it'

says Coach Tourism Council chairman Gerry Topiol

“CONGRATULATIONS to everyone at CBW for such a successful promotion of the second Coach Industry Awards.” That’s the message from an excited Coach Tourism Council chairman, Gerry Topiol, when he heard the news that the ‘house full’ signs had gone up for this year’s event on 25 November.

Mr Topiol said: “It’s indicative that the awards have been universally accepted by all sectors of the industry.

“It is still a very fragmented industry but the high level of interest in the 1995 Awards is a clear indication that it is now beginning to hold its head up high within the travel trade as a whole.”

The CTC has been involved in the Coach Industry Awards from day one and its valuable support not



Topiol: universal acceptance

only helped get the project off the ground but guaranteed that a cross-section of the operating and supply sides of the coach industry were keen to see it succeed.

Earlier this year, the CTC board endorsed the decision to go ahead with the second event after witnessing the benefits of our first awards night, which promoted excellence in coaching and coach tourism.

The board gave its unanimous backing to a sub committee - board members David Fenton and Jane Duffelen - which co-ordinated details with CBW editor, Mike Morgan.

This year, the CTC will present its own award. Recognising special contributions to the promotion of coach tourism, the CTC award adds

weight to the proceedings and strengthens its contribution to the event.

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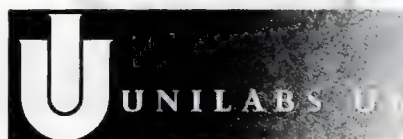
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COACH AND BUS WEEK

**COACH
INDUSTRY
AWARDS**

1995
IN ASSOCIATION WITH
THE COACH TOURISM COUNCIL

Night to remember: this year's event promises to be raise the industry's standing even higher

Quality and quantity

CBW is heading the crusade to promote the vastly improved standards in the British coach industry with the second celebration of excellence - the 1995

**Coach Industry Awards
Mike Morgan sets the scene**

THIS year's Awards event is the place to be. CBW links up with the Coach Tourism Council to put on the industry's high-profile Awards night on 25 November at the Metropole Hotel, NEC, Birmingham. Last year the response was amazing. This year it's a bigger venue, demand inevitably outstripped supply and there are many without tickets who will be disappointed.

But whether you are there or not, either guest or winner, the whole industry will bask in the glory of its achievements. It's a night when all the bad press and the trials of new legislation can be put to one side and we can enjoy success as our 24 awards are presented at one of the most exciting events the industry has ever experienced.

Nomination forms inside this magazine went out

in July. You entered in record numbers and, after verification by Henley Management College, those being considered for the shortlist have been informed.

The deadline for their submissions is this week and the judges now have the highly responsible task of selecting the winners.

Our Awards are confirmation that the quality of service provided by the coach industry has improved dramatically over recent years. Ability to make money, improve standards and promote quality had previously gone unrewarded.

On Saturday 25 November it will be a night for the winners to take centre stage while the whole industry can revel in the knowledge this is an industry where quality is being put first and where that quality does win business.





COACH AND BUS WEEK

**COACH
INDUSTRY
AWARDS**

1995

IN ASSOCIATION WITH
THE COACH TOURISM COUNCIL

Who are the judges?

There's an independent and an industry input

H EAD judge is Peter Cooke of Henley Management College. With lengthy experience of awards in other industries and with a background of extensive research in all aspects of the automotive industry, Mr Cooke provides a wider, independent view of the judging process.

A coach industry input is provided by the other four members of the panel. Jane Duffelen of Shaws Coaches, Maxey brings an operators view point. David Fenton of DF Travel has spent many years working in different aspects of coaching. As an industry consultant his opinion and business acumen are in constant demand. A different perspective comes from Rob Millea of Brents Coaches who joins the panel as winner of Coach Manager of the Year 1994. Lending the benefit of his considerable experience is our very own Marksman.

Our judges meet at a secret hotel near Peterborough next week and won't be allowed home until they complete their deliberations.

This is what the judges are looking for:

Overall Coach Operator of the Year: the operator who has performed to the highest standards across all aspects of their operation based on entries

Coach Operator of the Year (40 plus vehicles): evidence of strong sustained growth and special qualities which ought to flow from the advantages of large scale operation

Coach Operator of the Year (16-39 vehicles): a company outstanding in all aspects of its operation

Coach Operator of the Year (1-15 vehicles): professionalism, quality and range of product

Coach Driver of the Year: the driver with breadth of experience and an excellent record of customer satisfaction

Coach Manager of the Year: outstanding professionalism and management skills

Engineer of the Year: quality and reliability of fleet, freedom from defects and impeccable MOT pass rate

Safety Awards: initiatives which put safety first
Customer Service Award: clear evidence of strong motivation to putting the customer first

Coach of the Year (40 plus seats): reliability, value for money, safety, economy, and passenger/driver friendliness

Midicoach of the Year (16-39 seats): reliability and value for money from a quality product

Minicoach of the Year (1-15 seats): the same criteria as the midicoach sector

Best Overall Group Attraction: proactive marketing and service to operators and their drivers

Best Group Accommodation: value for money group rates, prompt response to group reservations and individual service for coach tour clients

Cross Sea Carrier of the Year: a coach and group carrier (ferry, hovercraft or train) which is the better company to deal with

Coach Wholesaler of the Year: focused, very professional and intent on personal service

Training Award: an operator who gives quality and quantity of training a high profile.

Best Tour Programme: a successful balanced product with innovation, new destinations and new ideas

Best Operator Brochure: a clear, well-produced brochure targeting its market

Best Fleet Livery: an attractive, economic and co-ordinated livery capable of cost effective use as the company brand

Dealership of the Year: service, product knowledge, industry knowledge, response to operators needs and customer respect

CTC Special Award: outstanding contribution to coach tourism

Best Marketing Campaign: a campaign rather than bits and pieces of unrelated marketing

Innovation Award: a company or individual who has made a significant contribution to improving a major aspect of their business

Suppliers back Awards' success

EARLY indications that the second CBW Awards had confirmed its position in the coach industry calendar was the speed with which sponsors stepped forward to guarantee support - some as early as the morning after the first gala night in Leeds.

Some of the industry's biggest and most influential suppliers were quick to recognise the strong marketing and PR messages which flow from the event.

CBW is delighted to welcome onboard all our major sponsors, including two of the major cross-Channel ferry companies, Stena and P&O. Both appreciate the immense value of the

coach business which they attract and their presence among the major sponsors is confirmation that the awards covers the whole spectrum of coaching and coach tourism - hence support from Disneyland Paris, Greatdays, Albatross and Botel.

Our major sponsors

Stena - overall coach operator
Plaxton - coach operator of the year (medium fleet)
Bova - coach operator of the year (small fleet)
Disneyland Paris - coach driver of the year
Volvo - coach manager of the year
Yeates - customer services award
Albatross - cross sea carrier
Greatdays - best group accommodation
Chapman Stevens - best tour programme
BCT - training award
Autoglass - innovation award
Others include: Kirkby, P&O, Botel and AVE Berkhof

As last year Volvo and Bova are among the manufacturers who have added their names to the list. And for the first time Plaxton, the UK's leading coach-builder confirmed its support. Dealers include AVE Berkhof, Kirkby and Yeates are all sponsors, as are influential suppliers, Chapman Stevens, Autoglass and BCT.





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Shirley Gillett: co-owner of this family-run company

Saffords of Little Gransden is a family coach company in the classic mould. But this third-generation business has broadened its horizons.

Alan Millar reports

In the back

MALCOLM Safford jokes that his business is so far at the back of beyond that reps can't find it. And certainly the view from his depot at Little Gransden, on a south-eastern edge of Cambridgeshire that the Post Office insists on calling Bedfordshire and classifying with a Stevenage (Hertfordshire) post-code, is of open fields and woodland.

Yet this business supports a British and European holiday programme which accounts for around a third of the work carried out by Safford's Coaches' 14-vehicle fleet.

The reality is that, although Little Gransden is tucked away on a rural back road, it's near enough to Bedford for the coaches to serve a population of over 70,000 people there as well as the many smaller towns and villages in the area.

Mr Safford and his co-director sister, Shirley Gillett, are the third generation of a family which has run the company since its foundation in 1933. Mrs Gillett's daughter Tracy now works as a driver-cum-secretary and one of Mr Safford's sons is currently working in the garage.

The company prides itself in concentrating on a compact area and serving it to the best of its ability. The pick-up points for holidays stretch from St Ives to the north and east, south to Hitchin and to the west side of Bedford. Cambridge is nearer, but has proved too tough a nut to crack. "We did attempt to operate out of Cambridge four or five years ago," says Mr Safford, "but our intensive marketing produced virtually nothing, so we've gone back to

the area where we're well known."

He says part of its approach is to get close to its customers. "I suppose you could say we have been trained to a certain extent by the general public," he says. "We need to be aware of what they need and we send out questionnaires every two years with some of our tours to get ideas or suggestions for improvements or even the occasional complaint."

This, and a policy of keeping pick-up times so short that passengers spend the first nights of their Scottish and Irish tours in those countries, does appear to work as Mr Safford reckons about 50 per cent of holiday custom is generated by repeat bookings and probably a fair proportion of the rest is either recommended by satisfied customers or comes from people who haven't used the company's coaches for the past couple of years.

Most of the customers are retired or near retirement age. "We target that age group via clubs. For example, flower clubs and gardening clubs are all prospective passengers for the Harrogate Garden Festival or gardens of the New Forest. We also do an awful lot of local advertising, but we pick newspapers which cover all of our area. You can spend a lot of money covering the same ground," he says. In general, he says that the company's modestly-produced brochures - the covers are designed by one of his sons - are usually more effective in selling holidays than A4 fold-out flyers.

Experience has also shown that holidays sell better if they've imaginative names. "For instance, we wanted to get back to Switzerland, which is still expensive, even last year. We advertised a holiday and called it 'The Glacier Express'. That sold it. Early last year, we did Vienna and Budapest and called it 'The Danube Capitals'. A bit of mystery and intrigue makes people more inclined to make more inquiries about a holiday." The tour season is also extending and this year four

FACT FILE

Name:	Safford's Coaches
Base:	Little Gransden, Cambridgeshire
Owners:	Malcolm Safford and Shirley Gillett
Fleet:	14 coaches (O-licence for 15)
Work:	Holidays, private hires, contracts, local bus
Turnover:	£725,000 per year
Founded:	1933



Small firms like Safford's Coaches have a niche in the market - but finding new business and keeping it is hard

of beyond

pre-Christmas "Turkey and Tinsel" weekends are extending the season into November. "We had already extended into October and Turkey and Tinsels are catching on. We also have two holidays at knock-out prices pencilled in for late February/early March.

As long as we can get a small profit margin at that time of year, the coaches are out getting our name about. At that time, people are looking to do Summer work and the organisers may even be on our tour, so it's worth doing."

He says it's difficult to sell coach holidays to younger people. "We did a couple of Spains this year aimed mainly at younger people. The first went out with 40 people and, although half of them were younger people, the others were our regular customers."

The other two thirds of Safford's work used to be divided equally between contacts and private hires and, although prices for school contracts are at last picking themselves up from rock bottom, workers' contracts have taken a nose dive in recent months. Fortunately, private hires have picked up. The company also does a couple of market day tendered bus services around St Neots.

Most of the work is done by second-hand Volvos, although there are a couple of minibuses and two Reeve Burgess-bodied MAN 28-seaters which are in constant demand and have stood up well to 10 years' service. "We had Fords before we bought our first Volvo in 1979," says Mr Safford, "and the day it arrived, it cut our maintenance per vehicle by half". Policy now is to buy late-model used coaches and keep them for about 10 years.

"Normally, we look for coaches with curtains and blinds; with this Summer we've just had, we can't ignore that. We don't go for double glazing because it's an additional expense which we have to be convinced is warranted, especially

when it's expensive to replace and it can put up your insurance premium." The specification usually also includes demountable toilets and executive features which appeal to corporate customers.

Customer preferences mean lower seating capacities are the norm these days. A 55 seater draws complaints from older passengers and, if it ran 57 seaters, they would only be useful for low-margin school contracts.

For occasions when the regular contract coaches are required for more lucrative hires, Safford keeps a Ford 'banger' coach and an Optare-bodied Leyland Cub known as the 'battle bus', painted in a different livery and bedecked with Safbus fleet-names so it doesn't detract from the image of the coach fleet.

For all its success, Malcolm Safford doesn't pretend that coach operation is anything but hard work. He says he has deterred one of his sons, a fibre optic engineer, from coming into the business and he believes the other, who has an honours degree in engineering, should eventually be able to do better than work in the garage.

"You can't generate the revenue to bring in additional people to relieve your workload," he says. "It is getting better but, after the 30 years I've been here, I can't see a fantastic future for small firms like ours.

"There will always be a niche for small firms, but finding it and keeping it is hard work."

CBW



Safford son's future may not be coaches

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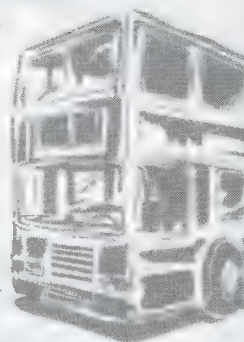
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The largest annual exhibition of minibuses and accessible transport in the UK is scheduled for next week in Blackpool. Mike Morgan looks forward to the event

Getting a lift: exhibition will show operators the latest in vehicles and equipment

Community transport for all

WHETHER it be minibus or wheelchair accessible minibus, Blackpool's Norbreck Castle Hotel is the venue for one of the most important exhibitions for coach and bus operators involved in this sector.

From Thursday 19 October to Friday 20 October the resort's hotel plays host to the Community Transport Association's annual show, the Minibus and Accessible Transport Exhibition.

Billed as the largest annual exhibition of its kind, the event is geared to helping operators choose their next vehicle and select the accessible features most appropriate to their business.

On display are vehicles from manufacturers, coach builders and converters. Safety equipment, passenger and wheelchair restraints are among the equipment which will also be on display, while details of vehicle rental schemes will be available.

The target visitors are companies and organisations which run, or plan to run minibuses or smaller accessible vehicles.

Although this is a

wide-ranging brief from local authorities to taxi operators it is recognised that there is a growing band of PSV operators specialising in this sector.

Concurrent with the exhibition is the annual community transport event. A conference and training programme brings together operators, users, manufacturers and others interested in voluntary sector and public transport schemes.

Over a four-day programme starting on Wednesday 18 October, the conference covers the rapidly-changing environment of new laws from Brussels and the programme warns that the community transport sector needs to come together to develop a common approach to the challenges that lie ahead.

For those in need of training there are over 60 sessions over the four days covering subjects such as: passenger safety; section 19; PSV operation; driver licensing; types of operation; vehicle design and safety equipment.

In addition there will be a series of minibus and accessible transport seminars on a wide range of relevant issues for transport planners and operators.

■ Stand listing pages 73 & 74

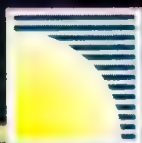
MINIBUS AND ACCESSIBLE TRANSPORT EXHIBITION FACT FILE

Dates:	exhibition - Thursday 19 October to Friday 20 October conference - Wednesday 18 October to Saturday 21 October
Times:	exhibition - 9.30am to 7.30pm (6.30pm Friday) conference - contact organisers for details
Place:	Norbreck Castle Hotel, Blackpool
Organisers:	Community Transport Association, Highbank, Halton Street, Hyde, Cheshire SK14 2NY

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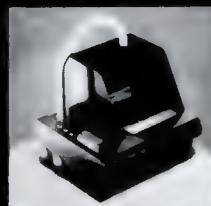


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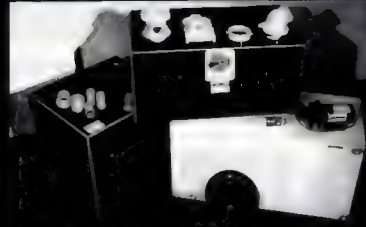


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EXHIBITORS LIST AND STAND LOCATION

A

- A1 Minibus Options
- A2 Crystals Conversions
- A3 Europa
- A4, A5 Widnes Car Centre
- A6 Invatravel Conversions
- A7 Ricon
- A8 Devon Conversions

B

- B1a Safetex Marketing
- B1b Smith Self Drive
- B2 Cunliffe Coachbuilders
- B3 Brotherwood Automobility
- B4, B5 Whitacres Coachbuilders
- B6 Unwins

C

- C1, C2, C3 TBP Vehicles
- C4, C5 Richards and Shaw
- C6, C7, C8 Pentagon Vehicle Builders
- C9 Ratcliff Tail Lifts
- C10 Bedwas Bodyworks

C11

Mellor Coachcraft

D

- D2 Omnihire

E

- E1 Derby Integrated Transport Services
- E2 Derbyshire County Council
- E3 Lewis Reed Group
- E4 Gowrings Mobility
- E5 ATCO - Association of Transport Co-ordinating Officers
- E6 Eberspacher (UK) Ltd
- E7 Q Straint
- E9 Jany Scandinavia Autotextiles
- E10 Rural Development Commission
- E11 LDV

F

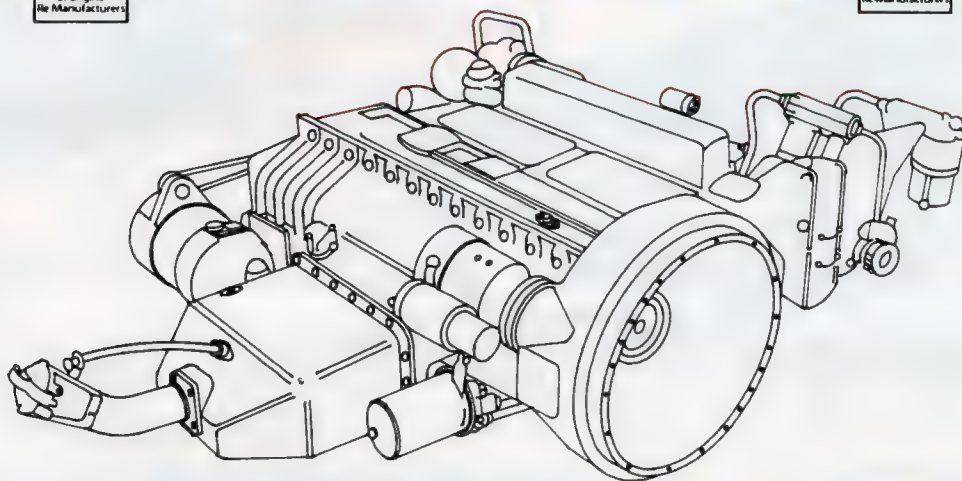
- F1 Autotrim Specialist Vehicles Ltd
- F2 AMK



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F3 Bayliss and Cooke
F4 Frank Guy
F5 Universal Vehicles Group
F6 Pilcher Greene
F7 Metrocab
F8 Javelin
F9 Gravells
F10 Papworth

S

S1 Wilkes Mobile
S2 Proximeter
S3 Bernard J Knibbs (Ltd)
S4 TVI Europe
S5, S6 Carstyle Safety Products
S7 Martyn Industrials
S8 Brigade Electronics
S9, S10 Restall Bros
S11 Drinkwater Chassis Engineering
S12 Camden Computer Technology
S13 WBS Keillor

S14 Cerney Computer Services
S15, S16 Gaskell Textiles
S17 Merricom Business Systems
S18 Royal Mail
S19 Halite Polytek
S20 Securon (Amersham) Ltd
S21 AVP Purmo
S22 Passenger Lift Services
S23 Quickfit Safety Belts Service/Reflex Safety Systems
S24 NMI Safety Systems
S25 Rescroft

V

V2 Tunic
V3 FCAV and Co
V15 KL Automotive Products Ltd
V14 Lancashire County Council
V16 London Accessible Transport Unit
V4 Signal Computing Ltd
V13 Orange Badge Network



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ECO; Coach and Bus Company are the sole distributor of the De-NOx Inspirator for buses and coaches in the UK.

ROADLEASE

WA cast-offs 'like new'



Paramount upgrade for East London

by Mark Williams

THREE former Wallace Arnold tour coaches were the perfect tools to replace Stagecoach East London's coach fleet.

Operating a roughly 50/50 split between its own excursions and other business, East London's tiny fleet runs with relatively low mileage but still requires a quality image.

"These Plaxton Paramount IIIs on Volvo B10M are really very nice," said East London's coaching manager David Jones. "They are unmarked and the seats look untouched."

They also achieve uniformity, and are painted in East London's touring livery of pillar-box red with the Thames



Barge logo and signwriting - a livery also used on the company's coach-seated double-deck buses.

"We're not having much trouble finding work for them,"

said Mr Jones. "They have seatbelts, so we mailshotted local schools who we know stipulate them. So far, we've had a positive response."

This season's excursions have also been going well, he said, and the addition of toilets may persuade him to look further afield for next year's programme.

SCANIA

High-spec Irizar gets inquiries



CLIFF'S Coaches has proven to itself the value of high-spec coaches with this Irizar Century on Scania K113CRB.

The air-conditioning in particular has been a major selling point, says the firm's partner Cliff Neighbour, but the overall package has been enough to attract new business the moment a client steps aboard.

"Air-conditioning has been a success story this Summer," said the High Wycombe operator. "Though I've only had the vehicle a couple of months, I've had a lot of inquiries, even from local operators."

Having set a premium rate for the coach, Mr Neighbour said he'd had a few private hirers balk at the price.

"But the moment they see it, they agree it's worth an extra £20."

Cliff's Coaches started life operating a single minibus on a council contract. It has grown in the last 18 years, now with a fleet of three full-sized coaches and four minibuses. And though contracts still form a part of the business, private hire and a small tour programme have also proven profitable.

"We've four of our own tours planned for next year, including Norway and Spain, plus another organised by one of our regular customers," said Mr Neighbour. "Our Century will do those and, though we've had a few niggling problems with it, I'm over the moon with its quality."

CBW



HUGHES DAF

**Premium price..
but ideal for high
mileage**

by Mark Williams

WITH the mileage clocking up on Ferris Holidays' Spanish shuttle coaches at the rate of 2,500 per return trip, a durable chassis/coachwork option is essential.

That's why the Welsh operator ignored the slight price premium attached to the Van Hool Alizee and DAF SB3000WS chassis combination, added air conditioning, seatbelts, toilet, fridge and water boiler, and set the coach to work for the last two months of the Summer season.

"We've got a real variety of coaches here, and we're constantly assessing them," said assistant transport manager Jason Ferris. "Volvo is the most heavily-represented chassis in the fleet, which now numbers 17 executive coaches.

"But we'd run two Plaxton 4000s on DAF SB3000 tri-axes for a while, and that was enough

to persuade us to buy DAF again. As far as the bodywork goes, it's essential that it's tough. An '85 Van Hool we still have has worn well, particular the interior."

Mr Ferris said the fleet is erring towards being Volvo and DAF though, with expansion on his mind, he's keeping his options open for next season's shuttle vehicles.



"This season has been a good one. We'll have taken 30,000 people on holiday to Spain by the end of October. We had none of the problems of the air tour operators, but that may be because we've been determined to continue to offer good-value holidays to the people of the Valleys."

The Winter will offer the

core touring fleet an easy life, since Mr Ferris is determined to steer well clear of the cut-throat pricing of the ski tour companies. Instead, he said, the firm will concentrate on European city short breaks.

"Fortunately, a really good season like we've just had gives us the option. If the price isn't right, we won't take the work."

WRIGHTS



Wright choice for GMBN

GM Buses North is taking delivery of another 35 Wrights Endurance-bodied B10Bs and five similarly-bodied B10Ls.

GMBN took 20 earlier this year, allocating 17 to Queens Road, Cheetham depot and three to Bolton. Seven of the new B10B vehicles will go to Bolton, the rest being split between Oldham and Bury depots.

"The B10Ls will go to Wigan, for operation on service 600 between Wigan and Leigh,"

said GMBN commercial development manager Paul Clear. He said the Queens Road allocation would help bolster service 135 Bury-Manchester, which had been growing steadily since MTL Manchester withdrew from the route in July.

The buses have met with universal approval, he said. They have kneeling suspension, electronic destination blinds, low-emission engines and double glazing.



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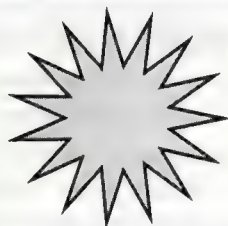
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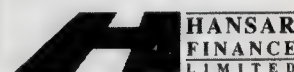
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90 MERCEDES 709, 25 coach, coach spec, p/door, coach built.
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90 MERCEDES 408, 16, coach spec, FF.
89 TRANSIT, 20 p/door, coach seats.
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89 CHARISMA 0303 MERC 49 exec.
89 TRANSIT, diesel, 14, PSV tested.
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87 BEDFORD YNV, 53, toilet, air suspension, new engine.
87 SETRA 215, 49 exec, toilet, Merc V8.
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87 IVECO SERVICE BUS, 5 speed, 19 + standees.
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87 IVECO, high top, diesel, 9+4 w/chairs.
86 IVECO, service, 19 + standees.
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86 LEYLAND CUB, 33 + standees, service bus, auto + Telma.
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83 RENAULT DODGE, 21 coach back seats.
83 DODGE R BURGESS, diesel, auto, 17F door.
83 VOLVO JONCKHEERE, toilet, TV.
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81 BEDFORD, 53 Duplex testing.
80 BEDFORD, 53 coach, tested.
80 BEDFORD, 36 seat, Marshall service.
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79 FORD, 35 seat, Duplex II, Turbo 6 speed.
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1980 BEDFORD YMT PLAXTON, 53 seater, red interior, cream exterior.

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(59296/VSM)

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1986 C FORD TRANSIT 2.5 DI, 16 seat 5 standees, power door, choice of 2, £1250 each + VAT.

1986 C LEYLAND TIGER CUB VANGUARD I, 32 seat bus manual gearbox, power door, dest gear, MoT May 96.

1984 B LEYLAND OLYMPIA ALEXANDER, 63 seats, full soft trim TLII engines MoT. Nov 95 / August 96.

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(57339/VSM)

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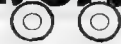
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(57909/VEH)

Coach and Bus Week ending 14 October 1995

AUCTIONS



BUS AND COACH AUCTION

MANCHESTER - BELLE VUE
(A57) Hyde Road, Belle Vue,
Manchester.

Wednesday 18th October 1995 at
12 noon

Approximately 100 various entries, the majority DIRECT from Finance
Companies, National/Local Tour and Service Operators.

PROMISED ENTRIES TO DATE INCLUDE:

EXECUTIVE/TOURING COACHES

- 1989 'F' NEOPLAN SKYLINER, 77 seat d/deck executive. Full specification inc. WC, servery etc. MoT March 96.
- 1985 'C' LEYLAND TIGER DOYEN, 49 seat executive, WC, drinks machine, servery. MoT August 96.
- 1985 'B' LEYLAND TIGER DUPE LAZER 2, 49 seat executive, WC, servery, semi-automatic g/box. MoT August 96.
- 1985 DAF BOVA CALYPSO, 53 seat executive. MoT May 96.
- 1983 'A' LEYLAND TIGER DOYEN, 49 seat executive, WC, drinks machine, Cummins Engine.
- 1983 VOLVO B10M BERKHOF EVEREST, 49 seat executive, rear sunken WC, drinks machine. MoT September 96.
- 1983 VOLVO B10M PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3500, 49 seat executive, rear WC, drinks machine, courier seat. MoT March 96.
- 1982 VOLVO B10M JONCKHEERE BERMUDA, 49 seat Hi-line executive, WC, drinks machine. MoT September 96.
- 1981 NEOPLAN CITYLINER, 35 seat executive, WC, 7 tables, drinks machine, fridge. MoT February 96.
- 1981 LEYLAND LEOPARD, 49 seat tourer.
- 1978 VOLVO B58 PLAXTON SUPREME, 57 seat tourer.
- 1976 MERCEDES 608D PLAXTON SUPREME, 29 seat midicoach

MINIBUSES/WELFARE/SERVICE BUSES

- 1993 'K' FORD TRANSIT 150, 15 seat minibus, p/steering, lap belts. PSV MoT August 96.
- 1993 'K' LEYLAND DAF 400 M2M, 16 seat minibus, high roof, p/steering. MoT February 96.
- 1990 'H' TALBOT PULLMAN FREEWAY, 19 seat minibus, chairlift. PSV MoT October 96.
- 1989 'G' FREIGHT ROVER SHERPA CARLYLE MK2, 20 seats, 5 standees.
- 1988 'E' MERCEDES 709D, 25 seat midibus, power door. PSV MoT July 96.
- 1986 'D' DODGE S56, 25 seat service bus.
- 1983 'Y' MERCEDES 608D, executive midi coach, 18 seats, 2 tables. MoT June 96.
- 1982 'Y' MERCEDES 608D, 12 seat minibus, wheelchair lift.
- 1982 'X' MERCEDES 508D, 19 seat minicoach, reclining seats. MoT November 96.
- 1981 FIAT 60F10 HARWIN, 24 seat midicoach. MoT November 96.
- 1975 LEYLAND NATIONAL, 52 seat service bus. MoT July 96.
- 3x1975 LEYLAND NATIONAL MK2, 52 seat service buses, MoT's July 96.

ATTENTION: ALL NON ADT ACCOUNTS CUSTOMERS
All non-account customers must, WITHOUT EXEMPTION, lodge a minimum CASH or BANKERS
DRAFT deposit of £500 or 10% of final bid price (whichever the greater) PER VEHICLE to the
auctioneer's rostrum at the time of sale. Please telephone Mrs P. Moffat - cashier, for further
information regarding payment enquiries prior to sale day.

For a complete list of the buses and coaches available, together with detailed
specifications, contact our DIAL-A-FAX after 6pm
Friday 13th October

MANY FURTHER ENTRIES EXPECTED AND INVITED

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DIAL-A-FAX 0336 413753

For a full list of vehicles or confirmation of their availability at this auction, dial the number above and press start
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To apply, please write with full CV & current salary details, quoting ref (8557), to Mr Pat Gallagher Senior Account Manager at the address below. All replies will be forwarded, unopened, directly to our client.



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MCW Mk 1 METROBUS

KCR Corporation intends to sell 17 nos. of used Double Decker MCW Mk 1 Metrobus with Gardner 6LXB engine and Voith gearbox. All buses were registered in 1980.

Any party may register their interest in writing to Mr. Dominic Kan of the Supply Management Section of Kowloon-Canton Railway Corporation on 7th Floor, KCRC House, No 9 Lok King Street, Fo Tan, Shatin, New Territories, Hong Kong no later than 5 p.m. on October 27, 1995. Facsimile (852) 2688 0429; Tel (852) 2688 1648.

If KCRC decides to proceed with formal invitation, formal tender document will be provided to selected companies in due course.

(57132/TEN)

Assistant Public Transport Planning Manager

£27,200 - £33,400

Maidstone

The Highways & Transportation Department of Kent County Council is looking for an imaginative, dedicated and well-organised person to manage the financially supported local bus and school transport planning team in our Public Transport Planning Group. This represents annual business of over £10 million which has to be co-ordinated with the substantial commercially-provided bus network.

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For an application form and further details please contact Mike Evans on (01622) 696798 at Highways & Transportation, Springfield, Maidstone, Kent ME14 2LQ. Closing date for applications is 27 October and selection process will be held over 9 and 10 November 1995.



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Coach and Bus Week ending 14 October 1995

01733 898111 DIRECTORY

A to Z DIRECTORY

**Telephone numbers
at a glance**

**Coach and Bus Week
tel: 01733 63100 / 898111**

You know the name - but what's the number? Find it here in the Instant Phone Guide

A

AA First for Coach and Bus
Spares tel: 0121 515 3672

Abex Brake Linings, P&P
Sergeant tel: 0151 632 5903

Actionform Ltd. Engine Refurb
tel: 01902 714242
fax: 01902 22880

AD Coachsales, New & used
coaches tel: 01884 860767

AE Auto Parts Engine
components tel: 01274 723481

AK Carpets, Coach carpets and
trim tel: 01254 871879

Allison Transmissions
Mitchells tel: 01623 550550

Andy Powell Commercials for
Dennis and Bedford spares
tel: 01432 341085

Autoglass Coach & Bus Services
Freephone: 0800 222777

B

Belaco Ltd, Brake linings
tel: 01298 811236

Berkhof, Ave-Sales, Parts
& Services tel: 01344 861787

Beral Brake Linings
Roadlink International
Tel: 01902 636206

Birmingham Bus Centre Ltd,
New + used vehicles
Tel: 0121 415 5111

Brushwash, Vehicle Wash
Equipment tel: 01252 377855

Bryden Riveting Machines,
Roadlink Int' tel: 01902 636206

C

Carlyle Parts, Windscreens &
Glass tel: 0121 555 5055

CCS 24hr Coach Mobile
B/Down Svc tel: 0181 5617838

Cheshire Coach and Bus
Coach&Bus Hire
tel: 01625 860888

**Coach Wash, Armchair
Brentford tel: 0181 568 8227**

Confederation of Passenger
Transport UK tel: 0171 831 7546

Cornish-NW, Insurance
tel: 0151 5461282

Countrywide Derv Ltd
Dover, Kent. tel: 01304 202934

C. Anthony Wood & Co
Accountants tel: 0181 866 8232

Cummins Engine Co Ltd,
N Harrison tel: 01325 460606

Coach and Commercials
Tel: 01226 752086
0831 294542

Central Bus and Coach
Distributors Ltd
Tel: 01531 640026

D

David Cocks M.I.R.T.E
Consultant Engineer
Tel: 01736 754333
Mob: 0836 358 582

DB. Associates Business
Consultants tel: 01799 540513

DB Commercial, Repairs &
Resprays tel: 01223 833121

Dennis Specialists Vehicles
tel: 01483 571271

Devon Conversions (CP) Ltd.
Mini & Midi's tel: 01392 211611

Diesel Masters-Iveco,
Engines tel: 01952 588895

Distinctive Systems
Computers tel: 01904 692269

Drivers seats, Thomas Scott & Co.
tel: 0141 763 2120

E

East Lancashire Coach
Builders 01254 57061

Engines, Preston Engines:
tel: 01772 651629

F

FCL, Foam & Air Filters
tel: 01604 671100

Fuel Management Equipment by
Triscan tel: 01254 682111

Foxlands Hotel
tel: 01803 328072

G

L Gardner & Sons Ltd
Bus Engines tel: 0161 789 2201

Gary Smith, Spares and recovery
tel: 01789 267990

Gas Strut Engineering
tel: 01234 843979

Griptone-Battery Booster plugs
& screws tel: 0161 727 9011

H

Hindle Auto For Engine
S R Trans tel: 01274 732284

I

Insurance, Robin Huckle & Co
Ltd. tel: 0121 454 8878

J

J Sykes, PSV Sales &
Spares tel: 01226 725702

Jackair Testers & Lifts,
tel: 0117 9673333

K

Kernow Driving Serv.
tel: 01850 701450

Kirkby Coach and Bus
Sheffield tel: 01909 551166

Kirton Bus & Coach
Dismantlers tel: 01652 648628

KONI Shock Absorbers,
Roadlink Int' tel: 01902 636206

L

Leyland Engines, call
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M

MAN Truck & Bus UK Ltd
Swindon tel: 01793 490231

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Mercedes Benz
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tel: 01908 245000

N

NDY Coach Sales Ltd
tel: 0191 377 1802

Nightbright P.C.V. Cleaning
Specialist tel: 01850 174029

Northern Counties Ltd
Bus Bodies tel: 01942 212135

O

Olympus Coachcraft-of
Manchester tel: 0161 2734259

P

Paul Gardner, Engineering Ltd
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Plaxton Parts & Service
Anston tel: 01909 551155
Direct Parts tel: 01909 550044

Plaxton Parts & Service
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Direct Parts tel: 0141 880 8008

Plaxton Parts & Service
Ware tel: 01920 462383
Direct Parts tel: 01920 465946

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Fax: 01692 406957

Preston Engines
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Prolift, Mobile Vehicle Lifts
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PSV Glass
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R

Reg. Plates, Tayside Numbers:
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S

SBC Glazing, Windscreens
tel: 01737 763588

Scania GB Ltd Milton Keynes
MK15 tel: 01908 210210

Screen Savers, Glazing
tel: 01831 551166

Southcoast, Trimmings
tel: 01703 660676

Steamy Windows, J W
Glass tel: 01283 32418

Steering Box Repairs &
Exchange tel: 01905 795955

Somers Vehicle Lifts
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T

Telma Retarder Ltd
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Time Table Frames,
Broadwater: tel: 01379 644327

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Service tel: 0117 9543291

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Transport Heating
Supplies tel: 01925 722687

U

Uniforms Unlimited, Fax &
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V

Vehicle Wash Equipment
Brushwash tel: 01252 377855

Vehicle Lifts — Somers Handling
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Vulcan Eng, Seats&Hand Rails
Halifax tel: 01422 202840

W

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Fax: 01324 633120

Workshop Equipment, call
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0151 724 2266

▼ Coach

Wallace Arnold has a new md

WALLACE Arnold's new managing director is former financial director **Ken Meddes**.

The post became vacant after the sudden departure of **John King** more than a year ago, after a boardroom coup by **Barr** brothers **Nicholas** and **Robert**, who ousted former finance director **Brian Small** and chief executive **John Parker**. The directorship was

filled temporarily by biscuit trade executive **Simon Mallalieu** shortly afterwards, but he lasted only four weeks.

Mr Meddes has since been the acting managing director, having been Mr King's right-hand man, with 10 years at WA. His team will be the incumbent product director **Bill Maxwell**, and operations director **Stephen Barber**.

▼ Engineering

Top moves at T&N

BRAKE lining specialist T&N Friction Products has promoted advertising manager **Jonathan Allen** (picture far right) to the post of aftermarket publicity manager. He replaces his former boss, **Alan Hill**, who retired earlier this year.

● T&N's subsidiary division Ferodo UK has a new field sales manager in the shape of **Richard Moksa** (right). A former 3M national sales manager for



number plate maker Hills Patents Ltd, Mr Moksa re-



ports to business manager **David Beattie**.

▼ Transport advertising

Bus advert company is restructured

RESTRUCTURING has followed Maiden Outdoor's acquisition of British Transport Advertising, with a large number of staff changes.

Maiden Outdoor has now been split into three autonomous divisions with three managements. Managing director of Maiden Transport is the former BTA md **Roger Fernley**. Maiden Operations md is **David Dron**, and Maiden Roadside md **Francis Goodwin**. Maiden Outdoor's chief executive is still **Ronald Zeghibe**.

Mr Fernley also joins the Maiden Group board and his former BTA colleagues, **Julian Macey**, **Alan Ferrier** and **Stephen Arnold**, join the operating board. Together with new business development director **Julian Macey**, Mr Fernley will be

developing opportunities within Railtrack as it approaches privatisation.

The infrastructure of Maiden has also been rationalised. All finance and administration will now be done through the Liverpool office, and posting of the former BTA sites will be transferred to sub-contractors, in line with Maiden's existing Roadside practice.

"This restructuring will enable us to focus our resources and efforts on two core parts of our business - Roadside and Transport," said Mr Zeghibe. "The Transport side in particular will benefit from the group's investment, innovation and marketing strengths. We see great potential in the Transport area and, through Roger and Julian, will be seeking to develop this still further."

▼ Ferries

Wightlink gets new marketeer

WIGHTLINK has appointed a new head of marketing to boost group and individual sales to the island.

Janet Saville goes to Wightlink with experience gained at Stena Sealink though, in her last post, she was head of marketing at Panorama Holidays. Mrs Saville reports directly to executive chairman **Michael Aiken**.

▼ Obituary

Top driver dies on tour

YORKS Coaches' longest-serving and best-known driver, **Doug Traynor**, has died while on tour.

Mr Traynor - usually known as Dad, or DT - had worked for Yorks of Northampton for 35 years, touring the UK and Europe and making many friends with his sharp Liverpudlian humour, which infected every trip he made.



The last vehicle he drove was a Setra, HMS Battleaxe, which was in his favourite place, Southern Ireland, when Mr Traynor passed away.

"We are sure he will be making them laugh on some Heavenly tour, now," said his friend and colleague **Michael Arnold**.

▼ Software



Brook joins Fleet board

FORMER chairman and chief executive of the National Bus Company, **Robert Brook CBE**, has joined the board of Fleet Software Ltd, recently bought out by management from parent company Mainline Partnership.



▼ Coach and Bus

Milne is CIT new president

NEW Zealander **Stewart Milne** is the new president of the Chartered Institute of Transport.

He was officially handed over by his predecessor, **HRH The Princess Royal**, during a ceremony at the CIT in Christchurch, New Zealand. Mr Milne has been involved with transport reforms in his home country.



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